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ABSTRACT

Thirteen articles, with an introduction, focus on the overall nature and effect of federal involvement in education and suggest what the federal role ought to be. The first five articles examine federal policy dilemmas in the areas of federal educational expenditures, fragmentation of federal programs, elementary and secondary education, criteria for the federal role, and categorical programs for the disadvantaged. The relationship between federal and state roles in education, including the impact of the new U.S. Department of Education, is examined in the next three articles. Finally, five authors present various prescriptions for federal educational policies in the 1980s. These articles include a review of the 1980 Democratic and Republican platform planks on education, a plea for changes in federal requirements for local accountability, a conservative critique of the Department of Education, a suggestion for improving coordination among federal elementary and secondary programs, and an assessment of the effects of future economic, technological, demographic, governmental, and cultural trends on federal education policies. (RW)

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The Federal Role in Education: New Directions for the Eighties

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INTRODUCTION

What is the proper federal role in education? Over the years this abstract question has generated a remarkable degree of passion and partisanship, dividing educators and the general public while making federal education policy a major political issue.

The debate is at least as lively—and as far from resolution—in the early Eighties as it was during the Great Society period. At this writing (early 1981) the federal role in education appears to be destined for its most searching examination, and perhaps most wrenching changes, since the mid-Sixties.

An outside observer, reviewing the numbers, may find the argument perplexing. Next to health care, education is the largest public "industry" in America—absorbing nearly 8 per cent of the Gross National Product and over 20 per cent of all governmental expenses, employing well over 3 million adults and directly touching the lives of every American family. But as Jack Jennings points out in the first selection of this volume, the federal contribution to education is now and always has been relatively small. State and local government each contributes roughly four times the money into education that Washington does.*

But money—at least where governments are concerned—is far from everything. Federal officials have at their command a goodly mix of carrots and sticks, as well as a potent degree of influence. All of these have increasingly come into play in recent years. As a result Washington's influence over education has grown far more than bare budget figures would indicate. Forty years ago a "typical educator" could plausibly assert that the federal government was almost totally irrelevant to his or her job. Few would make this claim today. For better or worse the federal government, while still a minority shareholder in the educational enterprise, is generally conceded to have attained a position far greater than its modest financial contributions would suggest.

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* See, generally, *The Condition of Education*, 1980 edition, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 1980.

This growing federal presence has now stimulated a growing chorus of criticism, which is transforming the nature of debate over the proper federal role.

Reviewing the arguments and confrontations over federal educational policy during the Seventies, hindsight comfortably at the ready, one is struck by the way in which these often bitter debates focused on means rather than ends. Arguments revolved about the structure of federal agencies (culminating, of course, in the three-year struggle over the creation of the Department of Education), the amount of prescriptive regulation (affirmative action, Title IX, bilingual education mandates, etc.) and funding levels for established programs, but generally accepted both the programmatic approach of federal efforts and the implicit assumptions about public education that lay behind these programs.

As the Eighties begin, it appears that the modern period of federal education policymaking—which, we should remind ourselves, only dates back about fifteen years—is about to enter a new phase, one that is likely to be marked by far more questioning of basic premises and established approaches than in the recent past.

More than ever, the overall nature and effect of the federal presence, rather than specific directions, has come in for searching criticism. Fairly or unfairly, the purposes, methods and consequences of federal involvement in education are all under attack. Comfortable assumptions about the federal role, and for that matter the place of public education itself, are being challenged in ways both new and old.

The legislative battle over the Reagan Administration's consolidation proposals, which appears likely to continue through much of the 97th Congress, is one sign of this "rethinking." But the larger issue of what is the proper federal role in education will continue to be debated long after the specific question of program consolidation is answered.

This volume, the fourth in a series of IEL Policy Papers tracing the evolving debate over federal education policy, is designed to contribute to that debate by looking at both the current dilemmas facing policymakers and some possible solutions to these problems.*

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* Earlier volumes in the series are *Perspectives on Federal Educational Policy: An Informal Colloquium* (1976), *Federalism at the Crossroads: Improving Educational Policymaking* (1976), and *Educational Policymaking in the Carter Years* (1978). All are available from the Institute for Educational Leadership, Box B, Suite 310, 1001 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Washington D.C. 20036, at prepaid prices of $1.50, $3.00 and $4.00, respectively.

Like its predecessors, this volume includes a broad cross-section of views about what existing federal policies really are, and what they ought to be.

Volumes such as this are part of the Institute's effort to strengthen and improve the policymaking system in American education. The Institute is a privately supported, politically neutral forum and training center that emphasizes three objectives:

—strengthening the formal and informal communications links among policymakers, educators, researchers and those who pay for and who consume educational services,

—offering talented individuals mid-career training that will increase their effectiveness and the educational system's quality,

—giving educators and the public at large a clearer understanding of key educational issues and what is actually happening—as well as alternatives about what might happen—in the nation's classrooms and campuses.

In their Foreward to *Federalism at the Crossroads*, the Institute's Samuel Halperin and George Kaplan wrote, "we solicit the written reactions of our readers. Nothing would please us more than an outpouring of responses—pro or con—which would justify a second collection of contributions to what ought to become a vital national discourse about the future of the federal system in education."

We hope for a similar outpouring from this volume.

—Robert Miller
IEL Senior Associate

THE FEDERAL ROLE IN PAYING FOR EDUCATION IN THE 80's

John F. Jennings*

Since much of my academic training was in the field of history, I believe that it is best to look to the past in order to understand better the future. Therefore, I would like to review how the last decade or so saw a very significant shift in the financing of education.

Within the last 10 to 12 years State governments have moved aggressively toward financing a larger share of the cost of education at all levels. Public elementary and secondary education, public higher education, and private higher education have all been the recipients of substantially increased State aid.

During that same time period, the Federal government has at best only slightly increased its contribution toward paying for the cost of education at all levels. In fact, its contribution to private higher education has actually declined as a percentage of the total cost.

Local boards of education, municipalities, county governments, and various sources of financing higher education have all been relieved to some extent of having to finance the same share of the cost of education as they assumed in the past. But the relief has come from State governments and not from the Federal government.

I have to emphasize that point because the popular impression has often been that the 1960's and 1970's witnessed the advent of the Federal government as a very major contributor to paying for the cost of education. The Federal contribution has been large and growing, but the rapidly increasing costs of education have kept the Federal share at a relatively stable percentage of the whole.

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* John F. Jennings is Counsel and Staff Director of the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, U.S. House of Representatives. This paper was originally presented at a symposium sponsored by Phi Delta Kappa of Northwestern University on March 8, 1980.

The statistics describe these conclusions best.

In 1966, for public elementary and secondary education, localities paid 53.0% of the costs; the States paid for 39.1%, and the Federal government 7.9%. In 1978, the respective shares were 47.8% local, 44.1% State, and 8.1% Federal.

Within the last 12 years the State governments have picked up a much greater share of the cost of public elementary and secondary education—a full five percentage points more of the total costs—while the Federal share increased only slightly and the local share decreased substantially.

In higher education the same trend of greater State support prevailed. For public higher education, in 1968, State governments paid 37.2% of the costs of universities and 37.7% of the costs of two-year institutions. By 1977, this State support had increased to 41.5% and 45.3% respectively—a 4.3% and 7.6% increase respectively. Other public four-year institutions received about the same degree of State support over that time period.

The Federal share of the costs of education in public universities actually declined—from 24.1% in 1968 to 18% in 1977. The Federal share increased a few percentage points in support of other public four-year institutions and two-year institutions—from 13.3% to 15.4% and from 5.6% to 7.2% respectively. Other sources—local governmental and private—made up for the remaining costs in those institutions.

The same trend of greater State support holds true for private institutions of higher education. Between 1968 and 1977, State revenue contributed to private universities increased from 1.6% to 1.9% and to other private four-year institutions from .7% to 2.3%. Although still not a major source of revenue for private institutions, State funding did increase during the last 10 years.

As regards Federal support for private higher education, a significant decline occurred—similar to the decline experienced by public universities. In 1968, the Federal government contributed 36.5% of the revenue in private universities and 14% in other private four-year institutions. By 1977, those percentages had fallen to 27.3% and 13.3% respectively.

To summarize the trends over the last decade, State support for public elementary and secondary education and for most of higher education increased significantly. During the same time period, the Federal share increased slightly for elementary and secondary education and for public two-year and four-year institutions of higher education other than universities, but actually declined for public universities and for private institutions of higher education.

Greater State support and only slightly higher or declining Federal support occurred during a period when many more billions than ever before were being spent for all levels of education. For instance, the Federal share alone of public elementary and secondary education increased from $2.0 billion in 1966 to $6.6 billion in 1978, or in constant 1978 dollars—from $3.9 billion in 1966 to $6.6 billion in 1978.

The overriding fact, however, which must be remembered is that the total costs of education at all levels increased tremendously during that time period: $43.5 billion was spent on all public education in 1968, and this amount increased to $107.6 billion in 1977. Consequently, even such a large increase as the Federal government contributed—even viewed in constant dollars—could barely keep up with the rapidly rising costs of providing education. Overall, the Federal share of the cost of education remained fairly constant during that decade.

A principal question that must be dealt with is what will happen in the 1980's. Will this trend continue from the '70's? Will the State share of the cost of education continue to increase, and will the Federal share continue to remain relatively constant?

In my opinion at least, the key fact that undergirds the expansion of the State role in education has to do with changes that have occurred over the last decade or two in the forms of State taxation.

In 1968, the States raised 19.8% of all revenues generated by all levels of government in the country. By 1977, this percentage had increased to 23.7%—almost a full four percentage points.

The dollar amounts are even more jarring. In 1968, State governments had 52.5 billion dollars to spend. By 1977, this had increased to 155.8 billion dollars.

At the same time the local share of all revenue remained fairly stable. But, the Federal share of all revenues declined substantially—from 62.2% in 1968 to 58.1% in 1977.

In other words, States have been raising more revenue relatively, and the Federal government less. In my opinion, this key fact underlies the ability of State governments to become more active in many areas, including education. This trend will likely continue, because the States' new sources of revenue tend to be more flexible than those relied on in the past, e.g., income taxes instead of property and use taxes. State governments should at least be able to maintain their relative revenue positions. (I will leave a discussion of the effects of the various taxpayer revolts to others.)

So, if we presume that the relative revenue-raising positions of the various levels of government remain relatively the same, is there any likelihood of the Federal government increasing its contribution to education from the substantial revenues it already has—58.1% of the total revenues raised in the country?

In order to answer this question, I would like to discuss first the future of Federal support for *all* domestic programs.

In 1979 the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations issued a report which concluded that Federal support of domestic governmental activities has crested and is on its way down as a percentage of total governmental aid. This report pointed out that fiscal 1979 showed an increase in Federal aid which was less than half of that shown in recent years. The current fiscal year — 1980 — shows a continuing and much sharper slowdown.

The ACIR contends that a cross-roads has been reached as regards Federal aid and that "State and local governments must depend on their own revenue sources for an increasingly larger share of their expenditures". The Commission did not give all its reasons for reaching this conclusion, except to point out that there have been efforts to restrain Federal expenditures to control inflation and that fiscal pressures on the Federal government have been relatively more acute than on other levels of government.

In my opinion, the ACIR does have a bias towards encouraging an enlargement of the State role in our Federal system; but nonetheless I believe that they have pointed out an incipient trend. And this trend is based on the relative revenue-raising abilities of the various levels of government.

If we presume that this conclusion regarding a declining Federal role is accurate, or even if we presume that there will be a relatively stable Federal role in supporting domestic activities, what can we say concerning support for education? It is always difficult to try to foresee the future. And anyone who tries to do so has to hope that, once the future has arrived, no one goes back to review those predictions.

But, I would like to risk a prediction. I believe that Federal support for education will be lucky to remain, during the '80's, at relatively the same percentage as it is today. This prediction is based on two general trends and on four characteristics which are peculiar to the structure of Federal aid to education. First, I shall describe the two general trends.

First, the declining number of adults with children in school has contributed to a *decline in education's political magic*. A decade ago 44% of the population were parents of children in the public schools. Today, that percentage is down to 28%.

Many people have concentrated on the declining enrollments which are occurring in our schools, but not much publicity has focused on the necessary correlation—that there are also many fewer parents. As a result, fewer and fewer people have a direct stake in the schools and so more people are inclined to vote for their pocketbooks instead of for the schools in their communities.

Propositions 13 and 5 in California are prime examples of this mood. And the enactment of those propositions shows, of course, that this public mood can affect State support of education as much as it affects Federal support.

There could be a moderating of this mood in the mid-1980's depending on what happens with the fertility of the post-war "baby-boom" women who have become or will become married within the next few years. But no one as yet knows that for sure.

Second, demands are increasing for other programs and services, especially at the Federal level of government; and meeting these demands will result in less funding being potentially available for education. Everyone is aware of the need for alternative energy sources, and the Federal government is about to launch a multi-billion dollar program of synthetic fuel production. More being spent in that area necessarily means less being potentially available for other areas, such as education.

Another area of rapidly growing Federal expenditures concerns the aged. By 1990, one in five Americans will be over the age of 55. For the first time in our history, this age group will exceed in number the entire elementary-secondary school population. And, since the elderly vote more consistently than any other group in the population, politicians take special note of their concerns and needs.

Another area which will gain many billions more in future Federal budgets is the area of national defense. To state it midly, there is a strong feeling in Washington that we have not spent enough on our defense forces to meet our obligations and that we must immediately begin to do so.

Those two trends contributing to a reduced emphasis on education in the future at the Federal level have to do with general demographic trends and with other factors in society. The following four reasons why Federal aid to education will probably not grow in the future concern things peculiar to the structure of present Federal aid programs.

In addition to those first two general trends, the *first* reason endangering growth of Federal aid is that *there is presently no broad-based support for Federal education programs* throughout society. Sixty percent of the aid administered by the U.S. Office of Education* is for programs of compensatory education for poor children in elementary and secondary schools and for programs of basic grants to assist financially needy students attending colleges and universities. Most of the remainder of the aid is focused on particular types of students, such as the handicapped, or on particular needs, such as for bilingual education or desegregation assistance.

Frequently, only the teachers and administrators immediately affected by these programs are willing to push for increases in their appropriations. Many others in education look upon these programs as peripheral to their concerns or even as detrimental since they might take time away from the regular school curriculum.

Secondly, and this point is really an extension of the first reason, the Federal focus on the economically disadvantaged, the handicapped, desegregation assistance, and other special needs leads at times to a *resentment against these programs.*

Most of these programs are being provided because of a feeling that the needs of these groups and the meeting of these interests were being ignored at the local level. And so, special programs were established to focus on them.

But, these programs had to be structured so that the perceived—and locally slighted—needs would be met with this aid. Of course, this led to the imposition of many requirements and conditions and then audits and much paperwork.

All of this leads unfortunately to a situation where more and more local educators are saying that they wonder whether the amount of aid is really worth the administrative hassle.

Thirdly, and this point is related to the previous two reasons, *Federal aid is sometimes resented because it is used as the instrument for enforcing civil rights requirements.*

School districts and colleges must revise their athletic programs pursuant to Title IX. Schools and other institutions until recently faced cut-offs of Federal aid unless they complied with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Schools and colleges must make their facilities more accessible to the handicapped pursuant to section 504, and they must not discriminate against anyone on the basis of age.

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* The U.S. Office of Education was merged into the new Department of Education in May, 1980 [*Editor*].

All of these requirements—which cause uncomfortable change—are conditions which must be met by educational institutions receiving Federal aid. So, not only is Federal aid focused on the poor and on special needs; but it also carried with it various conditions designed to implement broad social policy. I am sure that most of you here today support these social policies, as do I; but is it any wonder that the Federal aid which is used as the instrument to implement them is not any more popular, and supported, than it is?

Fourthly and lastly, Federal aid for education is usually structured as a so-called *"controllable" item in the Federal budget.* Only the school lunch programs, the guaranteed student loan subsidies and a few others are entitlements.

Although this last point may seem somewhat arcane, it is very important in terms of which Federal programs are funded over time. Education programs unfortunately fall into the category of those which are less likely to receive sufficient funding because the threat of legal action to secure their funding does not exist—as it does for the Federal entitlement programs, such as social security.

To sum up, these six points—two rooted in broad trends and four reasons peculiar to the structure of Federal aid programs—make it unlikely that Federal aid as it is presently structured will greatly increase in funding in the years ahead. The natural next question is whether there is any possibility of changing Federal aid to make it more popular and more broadly based.

My opinion is that this is not very likely at this time, and my reasons for believing this are two-fold. First, some earlier forms of Federal aid which are more broadly based are currently under constant attack for not being focused on special populations and on special needs. Most of these attacks are being led by those who want to curtail Federal spending and who have seized on these programs as likely victims of such curtailment. And their attacks are having some effect.

For instance, Federal support for vocational education, which dates to 1917 and which is relatively unfocused, has been held down in appropriations for the last five years so that—until last year when it achieved an increase—it had actually suffered a 26% decline in appropriations in constant dollars between 1972 and 1977.

Another example is the Administration's attack on the subsidy for students who pay for their own lunch in the federally supported school lunch program.

Another example of an attempt to cut back on any aid to the middle-class is the Administration's efforts to hold down spending on the loans for students from middle-income families. In an effort to fight off enactment of a very expensive and unfocused tuition tax credit, Federal law was recently amended, with the reluctant endorsement of the Carter Administration, to permit families of any income to apply through banks for loans guaranteed and partially subsidized by the Federal government. Since so many middle-class families are taking advantage of these loans now, and also since the interest rates the government has to pay have increased so much due to inflation and the government's own tight monetary policies, the Administration is trying to revise this program and to have middle-class families pay more.

So there is the dilemma. Many policy-makers in Washington believe that Federal aid ought to be highly focused so that it achieves a certain objective, such as aiding the poor. But by doing precisely that, the constituency for the programs becomes limited; and the programs become unpopular due to their identification with the poor or with minority groups. In addition, the administrative requirements are generally written tightly so as to achieve a particular objective, further adding to the burdensomeness and unpopularity of the programs.

Being reluctant to end this discussion on such a negative note, I would like to point out two factors that possibly may help to break this impasse. First, the new Department of Education has the real potential to take a fresh look at these programs and to create a different structure. In my opinion, this was not possible with educational programs being in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare because that Department had too many bureaucratic layers.

And second, the growing militancy and political sophistication of teachers, especially in the National Education Association, can possibly provide the necessary political muscle to find solutions. Teachers and college professors today are being left far behind in terms of salary increases to keep up with inflation. And so their anger may channel itself into being an effective political instrument.

As we enter the new decade of the 1980's, I am sure that many different parts of society are trying to foresee what the future holds. That task is always risky since unforeseen events inevitably alter what we thought were certainties. The Arab oil boycott of 1973 is a prime example of an unforeseen event which had, and is continuing to have, immense repercussions.

In education we may experience similar unforeseen but important events or trends. I would simply plead that everyone pretend to take seriously all of today's predictions but then have the grace never to remind any of us of how wrong they may all have been.

EDUCATION POLICY FOR THE EIGHTIES: WE CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE . . .

Samuel Halperin*

Social changes over the next few decades will place a burden on our educational system as great as any it has ever faced. Unfortunately, our present federal aid system is inadequate and has *not yet* obtained sufficient results to justify the substantial public investments in it. It is inconceivable that federal aid programs and federal education agencies, as structured today, can meet tomorrow's demands. In short, "We can't get there from here. . . . . . ."

In viewing the current federal aid system, three areas are of immediate concern: (a) fragmentary versus holistic policy; (2) overload: too much complexity and too much change; and (3) policy as if people didn't matter. Unless there is substantial improvement in these areas, it seems very doubtful that federal education agencies will be able to cope with a most uncertain future.

Fragmentary Versus Holistic Policy

The current fragmentation of our "non-system" of federal aid militates against a holistic view of education and the maximum development of human potential. We give far too little time and attention to assessing the impact of a given act on education or learning as a whole. Rather, our vision and our inquiry seem limited too often to narrower questions of schooling or of specific concerns, such as "Title X" or "Program Y." One year we legislate for higher education, another year for elementary and secondary, the next year for vocational. There is scarcely ever time to consider the relationship of one educational program to another, of one level of education to another.

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* Samuel Halperin is the Director of the Institute for Educational Leadership. He was formerly Deputy Assistant Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare for Legislation.

Virtually every congressional committee and over 70 executive branch departments and agencies take dozens of actions each year which affect the health of our educational enterprise. When, for example, the labor committees of the Congress helped to enact P.L. 95-265, the "Age Discrimination in Employment Act Amendments of 1978," they played havoc with both educational practice and budgets by requiring some institutions to retain staff they might otherwise have replaced with younger, presumably less costly, instructors. Similarly, energy policy—or lack thereof—greatly affects the solvency of educational institutions. While manufacturers pass along higher fuel costs to consumers and when the president deregulates prices of oil or natural gas, to whom do the schools and colleges turn when their heating and lighting bills soar?

And how educationally rational is it for public policy to subsidize child care and day care through tax credits while denying similar financial support for the same age child whose parents would prefer educational benefits in the form of tuition, books and fees? Is there educational sense in policies which, through tax deductibility of educational expenses, encourage individuals to improve skills needed in their current employment but deny support for training that same individual for new employment, presumably of greater worth to both the individual and society? Currently, television, the most powerful educative medium of our time, lies beyond the jurisdiction of the education committees of the Congress. So do telecommunications and many of the new technologies of tommorrow.

These are only a few examples of the *ad hoc*, fractionated character of contemporary policies affecting education. Even limiting our inquiry to issues within the jurisdiction of one specific congressional committee, for example the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education, it would be fair to say that—for all its many and real successes—the legislative process, as now constituted, gives inadequate attention to legislative oversight. Too often the predominant interest in inspecting federal aid programs is to find out what's failed and especially who's at fault. Too often the inquiry is conducted in the spirit of a prosecuting attorney, rather than in the spirit of a partner who also loses when things go wrong and who, out of self-interest, tries to learn how to make things go right.

Most oversight gives too little attention to questions of what it would take to get the job done right. Are the burdens and responsibilities imposed upon the implementing bureaucracies—federal, state, local institutes—administratively feasible? Do they have the necessary personnel to do the job? Are their staffs properly trained for these new roles? Are state legislatures and school boards likely to come up with the matching resources necessary to make the federal mandates more than paper promises?

When Congress authorizes specific studies, will the executive be given the personnel ("slots") and the dollars to carry them out, or will they remain hollow gestures? And, after a reasonable period of trial and error, and a truly collaborative and constructive attitude on the part of the Congress, will the Members have the courage to consolidate, terminate or otherwise replace defective programs?

Overload: Too Much Complexity, Too Much Change

I am an unreconstructed champion of federal aid to education generally, and of categorical aid in particular. But sometimes a good thing can be carried too far.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, there are now almost 1,100 federal education and training programs. *Depending on how one counts them, the U.S. Department of Education manages at least 150.* This amount of programming is counterproductive, for it faces educators and implementing bureaucracies with a degree of complexity and cumbersomeness that must ultimately be self-defeating. True, these programs can be "managed"—in the sense that the agencies can pass out their appropriations, on time, with complete compliance to managerial rulebooks. But so many programs—spreading dollars, expectations and dreams a mile wide and an inch deep—can never measure up to their potential. The human mind cannot really comprehend that degree of complexity. Of necessity, it focuses on a few central tasks and, in fact, defaults on a host of others. Everything can't be a priority.

As the president of California's State Board of Education, Michael W. Kirst, a former congressional and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) staffer as well as U.S. Office of Education Title I manager, has written: "The question becomes how much change can an organization take, and continue to deal effectively with its clients?" This is a particularly cogent question, since the way we Americans seem to cope with change is by loading a new reform or innovation on to the old system, scarcely ever reducing the original burdens. Shall we have Minimum Competency Examinations, School Site Management, Individual Educational Plans? Yes! Let's add them to Team Teaching, Early Childhood Programs, PPBS, MBO, ZBB, Flexible Scheduling, Open Classrooms, Educational Television, etc. And then we mandate or promote new curricula for every new problem or emphasis of society: Intergroup Relations, Driver Education, Metric Education, Environmental Education, Education for Death and Dying, Career Education, Ethnic Heritage, etc.

Overall, federal aid objectives are far too ambitious in scope for the amount of actual assistance they render to educational institutions. In a country as large as ours, we simply cannot hope to achieve large goals—such as educating all handicapped, educationally disadvantaged and non-English speaking children—as long as our resources are as widely dispersed and our personnel as thinly stretched as they are today.

A major reassessment and reevaluation of categorical programs is long overdue. However, that process must be based on goodwill. It should start from the assumption that the goal is not to reduce the amount of federal assistance but, if at all possible, to increase it in the interest of more effective learning. Increase it to the point that the federal contribution is large enough that one can legitimately measure what difference it makes in the achievement of school districts—and maybe even individual schools and students. Not like the present mode in which we appropriate $5 to 10 million in Washington and then expect "results" in the academic lives of 50 million Americans! (With Charles Beard, we need to remind ourselves constantly that "The truth of an institution is to be found not at its center but at its circumference"—where it touches the lives around it.)

One of the most important ways the Congress could help American education to meet the changes and challenges of the 1980s would be to develop a *few* clearly articulated themes or roles of federal aid and then to pursue them consistently and in a financially responsible fashion over a period of years, not subject to the ups and downs of educational whim and fancy.

This last point deserves underscoring. School systems throughout the country still regard federal aid programs as "temporary." From Washington, they have come to expect only the unexpected: Perhaps a new administration will wish to de-fund an "old" program? Perhaps a new Congress will change its tastes in federal aid fashions?

Even with forward funding, what assurance is there that the executive won't try to impound or rescind an appropriation? Since the Congress reauthorizes programs virtually every two or three years—and department guidelines and regulations lag one to three years behind the new law—educators and administrators scarcely know whom to believe. Their educational associations in Washington that faithfully report what the Congress has authorized and promised for the future? Or the executive rulemakers who, sometime in the future, will have much to say about the substance of those plans and promises?

It would be highly desirable for the Congress to consider a moratorium on reauthorizations of major educational programs. We need to get away from the syndrome identified by a former U.S. Commissioner of Education in which the Congress routinely pulls programs up by the roots in order to see how they are growing. The Congress and federal agencies need to send clear signals to the people in the field, assuring them—as much as humanly possible—that at least certain central federal aid programs are here to stay. State and local educational leaders need to be encouraged to integrate federal aid into their own long-range planning and into their own comprehensive school finance programs.

In addition to reducing the rate of change and level of uncertainty, there are several other "surgeries" Congress could consider. For instance, the House Committee on Education and Labor has three or four different subcommittees, each dealing with some part of education or youth programs. It may be that by having these separate subcommittees, the expectation is created that each is supposed to produce more and more legislation, more and more change, and consequently, more and more uncertainty for those who have to live with the results of the subcommittees' actions. It seems fair to ask whether a single subcommittee might not help to give education legislation a more holistic, comprehensive and constructive view than is now the case.

Similarly, it is essential that the Congress reduce the number of policymaking centers that affect education. *As of now, important policy changes affecting education emanate from eight or 10 "policy shops" and planning and budget offices in the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor, not to mention OMB and the White House.* Policy is too often made in the whirlpool of tradeoffs among these competing and overlapping centers. As far as I can detect, there is no evidence that this excessive number of policy advisors—incidentally, usually men and women of high competence and personal integrity—has in any way contributed to the making of *better* policy than was the case when there were fewer and, hence, more accountable policymakers and policy advisers. Indeed, I think George F. Will was at his insightful best when he observed of this general phenomenon:

> Washington has many "bright young men" who are not so young any more. They came hoping to be consequential, and just became irritable. Theirs is a distinctive Washington irritability that afflicts ambitious people when they face this fact: as the state expands, it employs more people, but fewer of them are consequential.

When the new Department of Education was proposed, *OMB was predicting that the new department would reduce the number of staff officers dealing with education* (legislation, management, budget, planning and evaluation, executive secretariat and public affairs) *from 22 to four. The problem is, it just didn't happen.* An incredible array of staff officers produced new veto powers in many places instead of clearly enunciated "policy" in one.

In a closely related matter, the Congress should consider what can be done to provide greater continuity to the managerial leadership of federal education programs. U.S. commissioners and deputy commissioners of education, responsible for billions of the public's tax dollars and for our most ardent hopes for educational improvement, have passed through the U.S. Office of Education—and now E. D.—at a rate exceeding that of Latin American and African military coups. In the 20 years since John F. Kennedy was inaugurated President in 1961, we have seen 15 commissioners of education (including long-term acting commissioners) and one Secretary come and go. This "revolving door" sort of leadership does not seem a proper way to administer the federal education enterprise.

Policy As If People Didn't Matter

Former Representative William L. Hungate spoke eloquently of the national mood about government when he retired from the Congress in 1975:

> Politics has gone from the age of "Camelot" when all things were possible to the age of "Watergate" when all things are suspect.

Watergate has passed but, regrettably, our national mind-set continues to denigrate the public sector in general and education in particular.

The Congress, itself sorely criticized, exhibits too little respect—and extends too little support—to the men and women who manage educational programs. "Bureaucrats" at all levels of government and education are subjected to blanket condemnation as a class in what John Kenneth Galbraith has aptly remarked is "the only form of racism that is still respectable in the United States."

Much of the appointed leadership of the federal education bureaucracy—itself of often undistinguished character and even lesser duration—is openly scornful of the bureaucracy, scarcely masking its suspicion and even its contempt. The civil servant's role in making federal aid effective is belittled and overlooked. Frequent and precipitous reorganizations further unsettle personnel and their programs. Bureaucrats are severely chastised for mistakes, told that they are lazy, incompetent and unimaginative. In many ways, subtle and overt, they are dissuaded from taking reasonable risks of professional judgment. Little discretion is allowed. All is increasingly reduced to elaborate routine designed to diffuse and share responsibility. Civil servants learn to spend their time securing multiple signoffs to every conceivable memorandum—what are referred to, in their lingo, as C.Y.A.s., which means to cover your posterior.

All in all, with morale near rock bottom, the bureaucracy is reduced to a preoccupation with techniques of survival, rather than with the *purposes or effectiveness* of federal aid: "What the heck. Let's do it by their rulebook and who cares if the program works?" To Congress' fondly legislated hopes, the bureaucracy responds by administering despair.

One point deserves elaboration: few training opportunities are provided at any level of our educational system for staff to become truly competent in their tasks. Congress and the executive have jointly done away with most of the personnel training programs which offer the only hope that the people who manage our educational system can rise to meet their many complex challenges. Overlooking the stark fact that most of the school principals, administrators and others now working in the system will be there for decades to come, we have defaulted on the opportunity to help those individuals become truly potent and effective in the conduct of their tasks. Ignoring an increasing body of research evidence linking the performance of school principals to the success of the instructional process, we fail to help them gain competence. Similarly state education agency personnel, student financial aid officers, school administrators, state and city school board members, and a host of other critical educational personnel whose work deeply affects the learning process are all left to fend for themselves.

Despite declining school enrollments, the case for training educational personnel and leadership has never been more compelling. With fewer and fewer opportunities for change in career, and less and less room for advancement within education, morale will remain "in the pits"—unless educators feel themselves enabled "to make a difference" in their work, to gain the professional satisfactions that attracted them to education in the first place.

There are no easy solutions to the problems enumerated here. Leaders have to respect and care about the people they lead. Leaders have to recognize that no program—no matter how well designed—is self-executing. People make the difference. Therefore, investment in personnel training is at least as critical as support for the program itself. Congress should take the lead in assuring that implementing bureaucracies at every level of government and in every program are assisted to reach the highest possible standards of professional performance. Only in that way can the dreams of the past and the challenges of the future be merged into a credible present for all who care about the federal aid system in education.

Alfred North Whitehead said, "It is the business of the future to be dangerous." Present-day conditions are no less dangerous to the cause of federal aid and to the health of American education generally. They need to be addressed *now*.

FEDERAL POLICY ISSUES IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Iris C. Rotberg*

Introduction

The change in administrations, as well as Federal budget constraints, make this a particularly appropriate time to discuss Federal education policy for elementary and secondary education. During the next few years, there is likely to be a reexamination of the assumptions and structure of Federal aid to education. This reexamination will come at a time when there is optimism, on the one hand, about the effectiveness of some of the programs and growing concern, on the other, about the regulatory, fiscal, and coordination problems they create for state and local governments.

This paper considers accomplishments and problems. Generally, our experience during the past 15 years suggests that Federal education programs can be effectively designed and implemented and that they can make a significant contribution. More important, there is greater realism about what programs can and cannot accomplish. A considerable amount is known about effective program designs, about problems and limitations, and about possible improvements.

Our expectations and assessments of Federal financial aid have changed substantially since the programs began in 1965. These programs at first were oversold. Many expected—perhaps hoped is a fairer word—that the programs would substantially reduce poverty and remove the constraints on political and social access by dramatically raising children's achievement and subsequent success in higher education and employment. Not unexpectedly, the early evaluations produced negative findings—in part because, at the time the research was conducted, the programs were not yet fully operational, and in part because the measures of effectiveness were based upon unrealistic standards for the success of the program. Current expectations are more realistic. Federal programs cannot change a child's overall educational experience. They cannot, by themselves, solve educational problems whose fundamental causes are rooted in basic social and economic disparities within the country. They can, however, if well designed, provide educational experiences which can produce measurable educational achievement gains.

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Objectives and Scope

The Federal Government contributes about 9.5% of total educational expenditures in the United States.[1] Most Federal programs are designed to respond to the fact that there are large differences in proportions of low-income families both among and within states and that certain groups of children—either because of poverty, low-achievement, past racial discrimination, limited English-speaking ability or handicaps—require supplemental educational services which cannot be adequately provided for by state and local funds. It should be noted that some of these groups are defined by educational performance—that is, by low achievement. Other categories are defined by their economic level or, in the case of bilingual children, in ethnic terms. Although there is considerable variation among programs in the criteria used to distribute funds, in general programs are designed to direct funds to school districts with a high proportion of low-income families. Within these districts, services are provided to target population groups.

The influence of Federal aid is considerably greater than its 9.5% share of the educational budget would suggest. Some states receive as much as 15% to 25% of their elementary and secondary school expenditures from the Federal Government. A number of school districts within states receive 25% to 30% of their instructional expenses from Federal aid.[2]

The great majority of school districts in the country rely on Federal funds to provide supplementary educational services to special population groups. Both for financial and political reasons, many school districts could not do the job they believe is necessary if Federal aid were not available. The problem has become especially acute in recent years, as school districts have faced increased financial pressures resulting from a combination of several factors—declining school enrollments, tax and bond issue limitations, inflation, increased energy costs, and increased proportions of students requiring special services including, for example, students from non-English speaking backgrounds. In this connection, it is estimated that by the end of the 1980's, Hispanics will constitute the largest minority group in the nation. Other groups, particularly Asians, also will require specialized language programs and increased expenditures.

Many school districts, therefore, find it difficult to support even their basic instructional program and are even less able than in previous years to pay for specialized education services. Morever, needy students are often concentrated in large cities or in remote rural areas, where the financial burdens are most severe because of deteriorating tax bases.

Program Effectiveness

Federal education programs are too diverse to permit a general statement about their effectiveness. The programs vary along a number of dimensions. First, there are large differences in funding levels. Title I ESEA, the largest elementary and secondary program, was funded at $3.216 billion in Fiscal Year 1980. Other programs such as Bilingual Education, Emergency School Aid, Vocational Education, and Programs for Handicapped Students were funded at between $167 million and $1.049 billion. Finally, there are a large number of very small or specialized programs including, for example, Ethnic Heritage Studies ($3 million), Alcohol and Drug Abuse Education ($3 million), Consumer Education ($3.6 million) and Metric Education ($1.8 million).

In addition to differences in funding levels, programs vary in purpose and design, in regulations and administration, and in the quality and comprehensiveness of the evaluations that have been conducted. In some cases, the perceived quality of a program reflects more the quality of the evaluation design and the fairness and appropriateness of the outcome measures than anything else. In others—for example, Bilingual Education and Vocational Education—

evaluation results are inconclusive primarily because the characteristics of the services provided are so unclear that even the most careful study cannot tell whether the target groups are better off and if so whether the program is the reason. Further, Federal funds account for only a small proportion of total expenditures in these areas and are not clearly used to provide supplemental services. These programs, therefore, are not easily distinguishable from the basic school program—the program the students would have received if Federal funding were not available. Program objectives, instructional approaches and participants vary greatly among school districts, even for the same Federal program, and it is difficult therefore to assess the effectiveness of these programs nationwide.

However, other programs like Title I ESEA, the largest elementary and secondary program, have been thoroughly and carefully studied and have produced clear—and positive—results. Title I provides funds to most of the nation's school districts for basic skills programs which serve low-achieving children in schools with a large proportion of children from low-income families. The NIE evaluation of Title I indicated that the program has been highly successful in meeting the purposes intended by Congress.[3]

First, Title I directs substantial Federal aid to areas with the highest proportions of low-income children. Title I is also "additional," that is, it is designed so that it does not substitute for educational spending at the local level. For the most part, it does not replace what otherwise would have been spent by state and local governments. Its effectiveness in this regard is considerably greater than the effectiveness of other Federal programs—both in the field of education and in other areas.

In addition to increasing resources to low-income areas, care is taken to assure that the funds are used to provide special additional services to low-achieving children in the poorest schools. Thus, participating students spend more time in basic skills instruction than do their classmates who are not in Title I programs. Further, they are taught in smaller groups and often by specially trained staff.

Not unexpectedly, under these conditions, the program enhances the educational achievement of participating students. Thus, the NIE study found that first grade students made percentile gains of 12 to 15 points in reading and mathematics between fall and spring testing. Third grade students made percentile gains of between 7 and 15 points during the same time period. Both of these gains were higher than would be expected without the special instruction provided by the program. While we cannot conclude from the results that all compensatory education students are gaining as much as those who participated in the study, the results indicate that school districts can and do create the conditions necessary to make compensatory instructional services effective.[4]

The NIE results are consistent with findings of other studies. For example, Arthur Wise noted in a recent RAND study that the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has shown increases in reading scores for precisely those groups who have been the primary recipients of Federal education programs--the poor, the young and the Black.[5]

Design and Implementation Issues

The design of Title I—in particular, the fact that it has realistic goals and is clearly targeted to specific schools and students—has a lot to do with its success. The Federal Government can meet its funds allocation objectives effectively without inappropriate interference in how subject matter is taught. It can direct resources to specific school districts and schools. It can fund supplemental services for specific population groups. Given the difficulties faced by some Federal programs, getting funds to the right places and the right people is no small accomplishment.

However, even these objectives, which seem relatively straightforward, are not accomplished simply or automatically. For programs to be effective, the criteria for allocating resources must be clear and consistent. Title I has met its funds allocation objectives because a very specific set of income criteria are used to distribute funds to states, school districts and schools. In contrast, the Federal Vocational Education program, for example, uses a number of overlapping and sometimes contradictory criteria for allocating funds.[6] Thus, funds are to be allocated to areas which meet the following criteria:

- They should be economically depressed, have high unemployment and inadequate financial resources;
- They should have low property wealth;
- They should contain large numbers of low-income families; and
- They should produce new programs to meet emerging manpower needs.

The contradictions in these criteria are obvious. For example, areas with high property wealth may have large numbers of low-income families. Areas that have emerging manpower needs are more likely to have new technologies and less likely to be economically depressed or have high unemployment rates. As a result, during the past two years every single state has had a formula disapproved by the Federal Government for one reason or another. That finding tells us more about the ambiguity of the criteria than it does about the performance of the states or the need for the program. There is no way to assess whether the Vocational Education program is meeting its objectives. This is not to say that there is no need for vocational education in this country. It is only to suggest that consistent and unambiguous criteria are necessary if we are to assess the outcomes of a Federal program.

In addition to clear objectives, it is important that programs contain provisions to ensure that funds supplement and do not substitute for state and local expenditures. Local school districts, faced with recurrent fiscal problems, are under considerable pressure to use Federal funds to replace state or local resources. Without provisions requiring supplementation, there is little reason to believe that the Federal funds would add to total spending for education. Similarly, provisions are needed to ensure that Federal programs in fact provide extra services and that the target children receive them. These outcomes are not obvious results of statements of Federal intent. They require specific provisions and careful management.

The point is made by the local officials themselves. In interviews conducted by the NIE Compensatory Education Study to determine whether districts would direct funds and services to the target population if there were no restrictions in the form of the funds allocation requirements, two comments reflect the consensus among the administrators interviewed:[7]

> "Historically, the educationally deprived in poor areas do not have the political clout to require the provision of equal resources, and certainly not extra services. Title I ensures that these children will not be ignored. Most LEAs (Local Education Agencies) in my state, if left to their own devices, would not use Federal funds for compensatory education in poor areas; they would be used to counter the current fiscal crisis, whatever that crisis might be." (State Title I Director)

Another put it this way:

> "Without strong language in the Title I regulations (about the intended beneficiaries and the supplementary nature of the program)

> there is no question that Title I dollars would be used essentially as general aid. I don't think the superintendent could avoid that." (Local District Title I Director)

Although Federal programs can ensure that the intended beneficiaries receive supplemental educational services, it is not at all clear that the program should attempt to intervene in local decisions about instructional techniques or planning methods. I suggest that the failure to make a distinction between identifying target groups and ensuring supplemental services, on the one hand, and interfering with local planning or instructional methods, on the other, has resulted in cumbersome and time-consuming regulations that at best have limited positive effects on program quality and may in fact detract from more appropriate and reasonable Federal objectives. It is the Federal involvement in local planning or instructional methods which has overshadowed the fundamental gains which have been achieved by certain carefully designed programs. It has also weakened the basic political support of even high quality programs.

There has been considerable discussion about this topic in recent literature:

- Arthur Wise has argued that improvements in educational quality are a local responsibility and that Federal attempts to mandate these improvements are ineffective and simply increase the bureaucratic complexities of running an educational system,[8]
- The NIE Compensatory Education study found that the Title I program development requirements are not necessary in the same sense as the funds allocation requirements. Although local districts have many pressures to use funds more generally than the funds allocation regulations allow, they have little incentive to deliver inferior or ineffective services. Moreover, even if school districts follow the procedures established in the program development regulations, there is no guarantee that they will produce high-quality services. No regulations handed down from above can accomplish that.[9]
- The NIE study of Vocational Education programs found that the complex planning requirements for these programs are cumbersome, time consuming, and do not result in positive programmatic changes.[10]
- Research on Follow Through—a large Federal demonstration program designed to compare different teaching methods for

educating early elementary school students—found more variability in outcomes from site to site *within* models than there were variations *between* models. Thus, the particular educational theory upon which the model was based had a very limited effect on the actual program implemented in schools or on the outcomes.[11] (This finding is consistent with the results of other studies comparing different instructional methods—for example, comparisons of phonics vs. whole word approaches to teaching reading. Although many studies indicate a relationship between amount of instructional time and student achievement, very few studies demonstrate one theoretical teaching technique to be clearly superior to another.)

- Finally, the RAND Change Agent study and other studies of program implementation found that Federal program regulations have limited effects on the quality of services that are provided at the local level.[12] There is a wide gap between Federal expectations and local education programs as implemented. One of the best illustrations of this difference is found in *The Lawn Party: The Evolution of Federal Programs in Local Settings*. The article describes the implementation of the educational voucher study in Alum Rock, California, in the early seventies.

> "The U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) sponsored the demonstration, hoping to discover whether competition for students would force schools to improve curricula and become more responsive to parents. But local participants had other priorities. . .
>
> From the federal perspective, then, Alum Rock is a story of program plans and priorities foiled by unanticipated local obstacles that produced major changes in the voucher design. But from the local view, vouchers provided the opportunity to accomplish a variety of things. Principals obtained more power, more money, and little competition, all of which they wanted. Parents were guaranteed neighborhood schools and some choice among programs, both of which they wanted. Teachers received the resources and the freedom to innovate and to teach as they preferred, along with job security. The superintendent made some progress in his efforts to decentralize authority in the district, and the federal funds kept his school system solvent.
>
> Few of the Alum Rock participants paid attention to the voucher blueprint or to OEO's formal assessments of its implementation. If they measured success at all, it was not against central plans and priorities but against their own differing needs and desires. These local needs and desires, in fact, changed and shaped the federal initiative, much as guests shape a lawn party."[13]

Problems of Federal Programs

The most significant problems stem from the multiplicity of programs. The combination of requirements from different programs—both Federal and state—often places trying administrative and financial burdens on school districts. These problems are summarized from a briefing given by Paul Hill describing research he conducted at RAND.[14]

The problem basically results from a lack of coordination and clarity in the current system. Students, teachers and principals must cope with the combined effects of programs that legislators and higher level administrators deal with separately and in a rather distant setting. The result is that the point of supplementary instruction—to give students extra help in specific areas without replacing the basic educational curriculum—is often lost when students are assigned to several special programs rather than to one or two which best meet their needs. For example, the research by RAND indicates that migrant Hispanic students in one district were involved in a minimum of 4–5 separate pullout programs daily (Title I Migrant, Title I reading and math, ESEA Title VII, and ESAA Bilingual). The instructional day was so fragmented that the students were out of class while the classroom teacher presented the state-required curriculum. By grade 5, most of the migrant Hispanic students in this district had never had a class in either science or social studies. It is one thing to provide supplemental instruction to students. It is another to isolate them from normal learning experiences.

Teachers, in turn, may have so many students pulled out of their classrooms for special programs that, in some schools, the classroom teacher has the whole class for only 1½ hours daily. In one classroom in the RAND study, 26 of 27 students were in pullout programs most of the day. For the brief time students spent in class, the teacher had to develop instructional strategies for children at 14 different achievement levels.

While these are extreme examples that do not occur in most schools, they do suggest some unintended and negative consequences of multiple and uncoordinated programs.

For school principals, multiple programs mean a great deal of administrative work and required meetings with various parent advisory groups. As a result, there is simply less time available to supervise instruction. The principal's responsibilities increase with the number of Federal programs in the school. Principals in low-income and minority group schools carry the heaviest burden. However, principals in these schools in the RAND study unanimously reported that they could not serve their students' needs without the Federal resources. The RAND researchers concluded that eliminating Federal programs is not the solution. The key is to find ways to stop putting the greatest administrative burdens on the people and places that are already under the greatest stress, but to assure that the funds go where they are needed.

The RAND study also indicates that students in multiple programs might spend all, or a good part, of their day in segregated classes. Most districts implement Federal programs by providing services in separate pullout classes. Since use of standardized tests typically results in a correlation between ethnicity and achievement, low achieving minority students are often placed in segregated categorical program classes. In some instances, Black, or Black and Hispanic, students are segregated for Title I reading and math, for Special Education, and for ESAA remedial reading and math. Segregation was particularly pronounced in schools with large enrollments of Hispanic children. Hispanic children in the study were less likely to be returned to their regular classroom than Black or White children, and were more likely to spend more of the school day in bilingual or ESL (English as a Second Language) classes.

The multiplicity of program requirements has produced incongruous patterns of services. For example, the NIE Title I study indicated that one-fourth of all compensatory education students are separated from higher scoring students for the *entire* school day. That pattern is inconsistent with the intent of Title I and other Federal programs and would be unacceptable for all but the most severely handicapped children under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94–142), an Act which requires that handicapped children be educated in the "least restrictive environment" possible.

Finally, school districts must respond to a large number of new Federal and state regulatory requirements that must be financed from local revenues rather than from categorical Federal or state funds. Since 1975, the Federal Government has published several major new sets of requirements in areas such as education for the handicapped, teacher training, students' rights to privacy and due process, sex equity, and education for the gifted. One of these requirements—the Education for All Handicapped Children Act—provides Federal subsidies for only about 12% of the services it requires school districts to deliver. Requirements of the other Acts are totally without Federal financial support. Further, most state governments have added their own regulations. In California, school districts can be required to implement as many as 33 state categorical programs including the Educationally Disadvantaged Youth Program, Alcohol Education, American Indian Early Childhood Education, and Bilingual Education.

The combination of regulations which are not supported by funds for their implementation and decreased local fiscal capacity has created severe financial difficulties for school districts. Not unexpectedly, districts have responded by (1) reducing the level of the basic instructional program and (2) using grant funds intended for one purpose or beneficiary group to provide services for another beneficiary group. The temptation of course is to go one step further and to seek funding which is without any restriction and which may be used, in effect—particularly during periods of fiscal difficulties—completely outside the field of education.

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act illustrates the problem. The Act increases special education costs tremendously—for example, by requiring teachers to prepare individualized lesson plans for each handicapped child and by encouraging mainstreaming—but the Federal financial contribution is relatively small. Everyone agrees that handicapped children should have equitable education, but states and school districts do not have the funds. During the next year, about $3.5 billion in additional funds will be required to meet special education costs. It is unclear where these funds will come from.[15]

Alternatives for the Future

Ideally, any changes in the current system would build on the positive outcomes of existing programs. What we need is more clarity and simplicity in the current system, while ensuring that Federal funds are used to provide supplemental services for target populations.

There are a wide variety of alternative proposals which are being discussed by government and professional communities. Although several of these proposals may have some merit, there is insufficient information about their implications to advocate one over another.

It may be useful, however, to note a few examples of options which should be examined.

One set of suggestions propose incremental changes in the current system to make programs more efficient. For example, the RAND studies suggest that we recognize the permanence of multiple programs and improve their management.[16] Under this proposal, both local and Federal action is needed. Local districts can limit the number of programs offered in each school, and give the responsibility for program coordination to district officials, who have more time to spend on administrative matters, rather than to principals and teachers. Federal officials can help by not adding new programs, by recognizing the problems resulting from requirements which do not provide funding, and by helping multi-program schools integrate their Federal programs.

Another suggestion for simplifying program management is to exempt from certain Federal regulations those states with high expenditures for disadvantaged children.

Finally, there are a set of proposals for various types of Federal program consolidation aimed at reducing administrative burdens. These include, for example, (1) consolidation of categorical programs with similar purposes into a single broad category serving the same target population; and (2) making block grants to states without regulations as to how the funds should be used.

Depending on how the programs are designed, it may be feasible to implement the first proposal for consolidation and continue to provide supplemental services for needy students. However the second proposal—the proposal for block grants—would threaten the considerable progress that has been achieved in designing effective Federal education programs. Programs without funding control typically provide general purpose government support rather than increasing overall education expenditures or providing extra services for the children who need them the most. If Federal subsidies are needed to relieve the financial problems of states, that issue should be argued on its merits. We should not assume, however, that under such circumstances the funds are likely to increase the quality of education or go to population groups that need them the most.

In short, experience during the past 15 years indicates that Federal programs can make an important contribution to educational achievement. The Federal Government can provide funds to needy areas of the country and to specific population groups. There are some unintended outcomes and problems of multiple programs; the most significant problems stem from a lack of clarity and coordination in the current system and from requirements without financial support. There is a need to make the current system more efficient without changing the basic objectives of providing supplemental services to the neediest students.

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14. These findings will be reported in a forthcoming RAND publication entitled *Aggregate Effects of Federal Education Programs.* Related issues are discussed in: Paul T. Hill, *op. cit.;* and Paul T. Hill, Joanne Wuchitech, and Richard Williams, *The Effects of Federal Education Programs on School Principals,* Santa Monica, California: RAND Corporation, February 1980.
15. Interview with Henry Levin reported in John Hollifield, "Tight Economy Threatens Educational Equity," *Educational R&D Report,* Fall 1980.
16. These issues will be discussed in the forthcoming RAND publication entitled *Aggregate Effects of Federal Education Programs.*

The explosion of federal education programs in the late Sixties and early Seventies imposed some severe strains on the then-Office of Education. As the number of funded programs mounted, U.S.O.E. found itself scrambling to keep up with new demands on its already-strained managerial resources.

Outside critics during this period were not slow to belabor the federal education bureaucracy. But, although policymakers in the Office of Education could plausibly retort that many of the problems they faced were not of their own making, many senior officials were troubled by the drift of federal education policy.

As the authors note, the following piece was originally drafted as an internal staff document in 1975–1976 by John W. Evans, then Assistant Commissioner of Education for Planning, Budget and Evaluation, and Cora P. Beebe, then Director of the Division of Planning and Budget in the Office of Education. It illustrates a fundamental irony of the middle and late Seventies—while those outside Washington often pictured U.S.O.E. as an implacable, if often bewildered, leviathan, those inside the agency were far more aware of its internal divisions and problems.

Readers will judge how accurate a portrayal of today's federal education policy this piece remains.

CLARIFYING THE FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION

Cora P. Beebe
John W. Evans*

Introduction

For most of the 1970s the two of us were responsible for the planning and budgeting activities of the then-U.S. Office of Education in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (Evans as Assistant Commissioner of Education for Planning, Budgeting and Evaluation, and Beebe as Director of the Division of Planning and Budget). As anyone who has worked in governmental operations knows, their pace of operation is so frenetic, and their daily demands so pre-empting, that reflection about their goals and purposes is nearly impossible. Indeed, there are many who believe that the basic functions of planning and budgeting cannot coexist in the same organization because the on-rushing pace of the budgetary schedule drives out any effort at thoughtful planning or analysis.

Nevertheless, we found intellectually intolerable the task of preparing annual budget requests to the Congress which amounted to little more than exercises in incremental budgeting. The federal education program structure consists of more than one hundred separately authorized and appropriated programs which have, over the years, grown up through a process of largely aimless accumulation. The programs range in size from several hundred thousand to several billion dollars. They cover virtually all population groups in the society, and deal with every educational topic from home economics to school desegregation. But neither the programs themselves nor the amount of resources allocated to them has been derived from any considered judgment of an appropriate federal role or an explicit statement of educational priorities.

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Thus, for both the Executive Branch and the Congress the annual budget/legislation cycle has consisted of proposing still more additions to the program structure in the form of new legislation, and adding unrationalized increments to the programs with the most vociferous constituencies. Though such a non-system characterizes the budgetary procedures for many public agencies at the state and local as well as the federal level, we wanted very much to change it. What this meant was attacking the basic question of the federal role in American education. Only by developing an explicit conception of the federal role, we reasoned, would it become possible to make other than *ad hoc* judgments about whether the federal government rather than state or local levels of government should be responsible for specific educational functions and programs.

What follows is our effort to produce such a formulation and provoke a debate around it. The material is in spartan outline form, extracted from briefing material we prepared at that time for presentation to various decision makers in the Executive Branch. It is not intended as a current document—although we would argue that many of the concerns expressed here are still valid.

We should add that the original statement dealt not only with the theoretical concerns reflected here, but with the need for some prescriptions about what a proper federal role should include. We played out, in short, some of the consequences of this approach in terms of desirable program and budget options. For reasons of space, and because of the passage of time, these options are not included here (although further information is available for the archivally inclined from the authors).

As for the outcome of this effort, suffice it to say that while many expressed appreciation for the ground-breaking character of the exercise, it has only marginal influence as a reference point for making determinations about the appropriateness of programs for federal sponsorship or for allocating scarce resources. In the end, other considerations, including political ones, dominated the judgment as to what programs should exist and what resources they should receive.

Despite this essentially unsuccessful outcome of our effort, we are not cynical about it nor do we believe that it was wasted. Neither do we believe that the goal of rational planning for governmental programs and expenditures should be abandoned. For planners and analysts fresh from the protected environs of academia, there is a hard lesson to learn: the real world of governmental programs, laws, and budgets is predominantly political, and reflects the pluralistic character of our society and the electorate. It can hardly be otherwise. Nor should it be. But even though rational, statistically based decision models and planning mechanisms are not likely to become the principal basis for governmental decision making, it is wrong to conclude that they can have no influence at all. All governmental processes are becoming increasingly subject to assessment by rational and objective standards.

As we write this in early 1981, a new effort is under way by a new administration to tackle the problem of what educational programs and expenditures the federal government should support. Many believe at this point that these efforts too will run aground in many places on the shoals of entrenched political interests, but it seems likely also that rational efforts to define the federal role in American education will reappear and that they will have increasing impact on the decisions that are made.

Clarifying the Federal Role

1. *The Federal role in American education is small and likely to remain so.* The Education Division's fiscal 1977 budget of about $9 billion is only six percent of the total national expenditures on education of $135 billion.

Even adding in the expenditures of all other federal agencies—for programs such as the G.I. Bill, school lunches, Defense Department schools and the like—would bring the federal total up to $21 billion or 15 per cent of the national cost of education.

At the same time the tradition of local control remains strong. There is no prospect of a totally centralized or "European ministry" system in sight.

Another factor restraining any expansion of federal expenditures is the competition for funds from other pressing areas of domestic expenditures, such as welfare.

2. *Although small, the federal role in American education is not concentrated, specialized or focused on any consciously selected mission or area of responsibility. Rather, it has grown up through a process of ad hoc accretion.*

Thus, the Federal government supports programs in almost every educational area addressed to almost all educational target populations and institutions:

Content Areas and Target Populations
Addressed by Federal Education Programs

Content Areas	Target Populations and Institutions
1. Compensatory Education	1. Economically Disadvantaged
2. Teacher Training	2. College Students (Both Middle Class & Disadvantaged)
3. Postsecondary Student Aid	3. Migrants
4. Impact Aid	4. Handicapped
5. Research, Development, Demonstration and Dissemination	5. Indians
6. State Administration Support	6. State Departments of Education
7. Bilingual Education	7. College & Universities
8. Drug Abuse Education	8. Libraries
9. Vocational Education	9. Illiterate Adults
10. Ethnic Studies	10. Veterans
11. Environmental Education	11. The Non-English Speaking
12. Desegregation	12. Local School Districts
13. Library Support	13. Vocational/Technical Schools
14. Work-Study	14. State Institutions
15. International Education	15. Dependent Schools
16. Construction	
17. Metric Education	
18. Career Education	
19. Consumer and Homemaking Education	
20. Arts and Humanities Education	
21. Educational TV	
22. Cooperative Education	
23. Community Schools	
24. Food Programs	
25. Early Childhood Education	
26. Science Education	
27. Reading	

3. *There is also much inconsistency and unclarity about the nature and limits of Federal responsibility.* When is it appropriate to assume full responsibility, and pay for all needed services? When is it appropriate to develop and demonstrate effective techniques and approaches, and leave actual implementation and service delivery up to the states and localities? This dilemma over strategy and

purpose can be seen in many Federal programs—for example Follow Through and Bilingual Education.

4. *Not only does the substance and direction of the Federal role lack clear definition, but the pattern also reflects the ad hoc nature of Federal involvement in American education.*

When put in comparative terms, some of the funding patterns within Federal aid to education appear hard to understand.

For example, in the Federal budget:

- We are spending twice as much on libraries as we are on Bilingual education.
- We are spending 35 times as much on aiding college students as we are on educational programs for illiterate adults.
- We are spending 20 times as much on direct educational service programs as we are on all educational research, development, demonstration, and dissemination combined.
- We are spending twice as much on vocational education as we are on desegregation assistance.
- We are spending the same amount on the "B" part of the Impact Aid program as we are on Indian education.
- We are spending four times as much on consumer and homemaking education as we are on career education.
- We are aiding 80% of the disadvantaged college students through the Basic Grants program, but only 40% of the elementary and secondary students eligible for Title I.

It is doubtful that the choices and trade-offs that we have in fact made reflect conscious decisions about what the Federal priorities are and how scarce Federal dollars should be allocated.

5. *Achieving a clarification of the Federal role in education can have important and far reaching benefits.*

It can help clarify the complementary responsibilities of the different levels of government, and thereby reduce the unguided growth of conflicting and overlapping programs and activities at the Federal, state and local levels of government.

—It can help stem the continued *ad hoc* growth of the Federal education structure by providing both the Executive and Congressional branches with a basis for judging what will surely be an increasingly large and diverse number of proposals for the Federal government to fund education programs.

—It will allow the limited Federal dollars to be concentrated on problems and programs that are properly the responsibility of the Federal government and of high educational priority.

—It will underscore and reinforce the limited Federal role in education and avoid intrusions on areas that properly should be reserved to the states.

Proposed Criteria for the Federal Role

1. In the absence of special and compelling reasons to the contrary, *the provision of basic educational services is a state and local responsibility.*
2. The Federal government is responsible for *preserving individuals' fundamental rights to equitable participation in the educational system.*
3. The Federal government is responsible for *compensating for Federally-imposed financial burdens,* in areas such as Impact Aid and Veterans' Educational Benefits.
4. The Federal government properly has the responsibility for *"assessing the status and progress of American education."**
5. The Federal government has a primary responsibility, in partnership with the states and with the postsecondary and private sectors, for providing leadership in *improving the quality and relevance of American education,* through research, development, demonstration and evaluation efforts.
6. It is appropriately the Federal government's responsibility to intervene in order to deal with *critical educational problems which have serious national consequences and are beyond the ability (or, sometimes, willingness) of state/local governments to solve.*

Criterion 6 has its major application in three areas:

a. assuring that *critical personnel shortages* do not have crippling effects on the nation's economy and the functioning of its basic institutions.
b. supporting *compensatory education* programs because of the manifold national consequences of educational disadvantagement among a sizeable portion of the population, in unemployment and loss of productivity, welfare costs, crime, lack of individualized opportunities, etc.
c. *equalizing educational opportunity for postsecondary education,* where comprehensive systems of free public education do not exist.

Criterion 6 currently, and properly, justifies the expenditures of most Education Division program dollars.

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* The original U.S. Office of Education establishment act of 1862 set this out as the major function of the Office. [*Editor*]

Where the Criteria Lead

Although many of the current Education Division programs fit comfortably within one or more of these criteria, a number clearly do not. Although some of these are relatively small in terms of federal employees and dollars, some are of significant size. In any case, whether small or large, the mere existence of these programs imposes significant costs on the Federal government. The drain on scarce dollars may be less significant than the drain on other scarce resources—particularly by diverting time, staff and attention away from realizing more important objectives and by making the Education Division needlessly over-bureaucratic and cumbersome.

The clear implication of this logic is that concentrating current efforts on a smaller but more coherent array of USOE programs would be educationally, managerially, and fiscally desirable.

As much as a third of the existing budget for the Education Division could profitably be re-deployed in this way, over time.

Remaining Issues

The purpose of this discussion is to lay out a theoretical model which will serve as a template against which to measure the existing education program array.

This model is only the first step in an effort to rationalize that array. It leaves many questions for subsequent discussion.

For instance, the model does not indicate the relative priorities among the criteria. It does not indicate how to determine or carry out an optimum strategy for programs that fit the criteria. Nor does it reveal how to improve program interconnections and efficiency.

These strategy and trade-off considerations usually dominate whatever discussions of policy are allowed by the day-to-day demands of managing 120+ programs. They should continue to do so. But their ultimate resolution will depend on an explicit rationalization of the federal role.

Role, Strategy and Priority

Given the limited resources and leverage available at the Federal level, interventions must be carefully tailored on truly major problems. They must also attempt to use strategies that maximize the return on investment.

As a general rule, proposals for Federal aid should be evaluated in terms of the following kinds of questions:

- In terms of these criteria, what is the *need* for the effort? What data are available to document the extent of the educational problem?
- Given the existence of a documented problem that satisfies the above criteria, how would Federal intervention in the area meet the criteria defining the Federal role in education? Why should not or cannot the problem be left to State, local or private efforts? In other words, does this problem have any relationship to the proper Federal *role* in education?
- If there is a need that properly falls within the sphere of Federal actions, why *policy* should the Federal government pursue? What should the government's objectives be?
- Once policy is settled, what programmatic *strategy* should be adopted to reach this goal?
- Finally, how does the program relate to the central educational problems the Federal government must deal with? In other words, what is the *priority?*

In pursuing this process, careful distinctions should be made among the available program strategies. Even after the threshold question of Federal role and responsibility is answered, it is vital to avoid the *uncritical* acceptance of cost-sharing or service-oriented approaches. Logic and experience both suggest that the most effective use of Federal funds is to supplement baseline state and local (and private) efforts rather than supplant them.

Given this outlook, then, it makes sense to determine whether a given problem cannot be solved through solutions that emphasize as far as possible catalytic efforts that inject innovations into ongoing practices or else build state and local capacities.

If a capacity-building approach is not feasible—because of the intractability and cost of the problem and/or the inability or unwillingness of the state and local agencies to provide adequate services—*and* if the problem has a high enough national priority, then supplementary services may be justified. And, finally, in the extraordinary cases where the usual patterns of state and local support are not present, there may be justification for the direct provision of services by the Federal government.

Clearly either of the latter two approaches will be expensive, limiting the Federal government's ability to put resources into other areas that promise large payoffs. Therefore, as far as possible without sacrificing national priorities, the capacity-building approach should be the Federal strategy of first-choice.

One example where capacity building would apply is the Bilingual Education Program (ESEA VII), which is an effort to build the bilingual resources available to the system to the point that State and local agencies will be able to offer high quality bilingual instruction. But the important thing is that the federal government, in pursuing its aim of improving the bilingual capacities of the system as a whole, should resist the constant pressures to provide general services instead of improving the overall effectiveness of the system.

An example of a capacity building effort within a larger program area is the Special Education Personnel Development program. This training program supplies needed trained personnel in a shortage area through direct fellowship support. At the same time it provides institutional aid that increases the quality and quantity of training programs. In the long run, this type of effort is designed to build local capacities to the point that Federal training funds are no longer needed.

The pre-eminent example of "supplementary services" is, of course, ESEA Title I, which gives State and local agencies the added resources needed to attack the educational effects of poverty.

Finally, an example of direct support is the provision of Impact Aid funds to other Federal agencies as compensation for educational outlays they have made. (For instance, the Office of Education compensates the Defense Department for the costs of operating base schools for military dependents.)

The distinctions in program strategy between capacity-building, supplementary costs and direct support are most clear-cut in the area of elementary and secondary education—an area with a fairly clear structure for the delivery of services. Yet the basic rationale is also applicable to postsecondary education. Here also the three types of approaches mentioned above exist—as for instance in the capacity building efforts pursued by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, the "supplementary" types of aid exemplified by the Basic Grants approach, and the direct services funded by the Language Training and Area Studies Programs.

There is, to be sure, one vital difference between the two fields. With the single, though important, exception of handicapped children, all children in the United States have access to some form of free public education. The problem in elementary and secondary education is not to open the gates but to improve the structure itself.

This is not the case in higher education. During the past 20 years a consensus has emerged that giving all of the "college-age" and adult population the opportunity for postsecondary education is an important national goal. But the gates to postsecondary education (as well as adult basic and continuing education) are still partly shut. In order to meet this national goal, the Federal government has put priority on the provision of access to postsecondary education rather than on qualitative improvement.

However, this important difference in educational policy should not mask the problem, common to both areas, of setting priorities and determining the appropriate Federal role. This is more than a mechanical exercise, even if the appropriateness of some type of effort is generally conceded. It is a common temptation to allocate Federal education funds by "sector"—so much for postsecondary education, say, or so much "for the Indians"—without a real effort to weigh needs and possibilities against each other in a disciplined and coordinated way. This paper has attempted to avoid this approach and develop plans keyed to priorities for the agency as a whole, set against criteria for an appropriate Federal role.

These distinctions are important precisely because of the general tendency of existing programs to move in a "service" direction. Unless this inherent tendency is carefully controlled, within a few years the Education Division is all too likely to be left with a duplicative array of service-oriented efforts, none fully meeting educational needs, all competing vigorously for funds, few if any really pursuing the innovative and catalytic efforts that should be the Federal government's main concern.

Until recently, much of the debate about the existing array of federal education programs could be classified easily, if a bit arbitrarily—"liberals" emphasized the value of the programs in making certain that scarce resources were not dribbled away, while "conservatives" attacked the programs for eroding local control over education. The first group accused the second of indifference to the real problems of disadvantaged and minority students; the second group blasted the first for fostering statism under the cloak of civil rights. These presumptions dominated the debate through the Sixties and Seventies.

There are, however, signs that the comfortable liberal-conservative dichotomy is starting to break down, as observers from both camps find common ground and common problems.

In their plea for a more "holistic" approach to federal aid, Harriet Bernstein and Dan Merenda exemplify the new kinds of criticism that federal programs are now facing.

CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS: PAST AND PRESENT

Harriet T. Bernstein and Daniel W. Merenda[*]

> *"The trouble with categorical programs is that the programs are categorical and the children are not . . ."*
>
> *State Superintendent—1980*

Observant residents of the educational countryside have watched the birth, growth and development of categorical services programs, noting the ebb and flow of conflicts between the "parent" federal government and the "family" of educators and children most in need of educational success. This paper provides a brief historical perspective on the origins of categorical programs, some general sense of how those programs have evolved over time, and an analysis of the assumptions imbedded in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) categorical programs. With the benefits of hindsight and contemporary findings from the research community about schools and schooling, we will analyze and explore the problems associated with the army of federal programs converging upon and doing battle within the confines of the public school campus.

Finally, our paper concludes with recommendations for consderation by federal policymakers seeking to improve the effectiveness of federal interventions in compensatory education. Just as scientists involved in research on recombinant DNA have been required to insure the safety of their labs as they restructure genes and tinker with chromosomes which affect the future of life itself, so must educational policymakers be cautioned to control their classroom experiments lest they create a national epidemic of disjointed, fragmented institutions, previously known as the public educational system.

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How the Idea of Categorical Aid Proliferated

Although the federal government has offered categorical aid for education for a long time (the Smith-Hughes Vocational Education program of 1917 is a prime example), these programs were relatively small until fifteen years ago. The categorical aid concept grew in the Sixties more from the discovery of a workable political strategy than from an educational analysis of the needs of disadvantaged children. Looking at the nature of these programs today, one might infer that the basis for the categorical approach was the commonsense idea that limited federal funds should be reserved for the benefit of those children that had been historically neglected and who needed extra help. While this was one justification, it was not the foremost one in the minds of the framers of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.[1]

In post-World War II America, progressive educational leaders at every level of governance shared a concern over the fiscal plight of the schools. The war forced local school districts to postpone needed construction, and the post-war baby boom further intensified the school housing crisis. Not only were teachers in short supply; they were organizing and demanding better salaries.

For more than a decade, liberals struggled to enact some form of general aid to the schools. They were opposed by a formidable coalition composed of Southern Democrats, conservative Republicans, those in charge of Catholic and other private schools, and some educators and parents. Conservatives opposed general aid to education on constitutional and political grounds, claiming that the states alone were responsible for public education and fearing that federal aid would further centralize power in Washington. Catholic forces opposed federal aid unless private schools were included, but strict separationists vigorously opposed any aid bill which gave money to religious schools. The Powell Amendment, which barred the use of federal funds in racially segregated institutions, mobilized Southern opposition against general aid bills until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made the amendment redundant. Additionally, many Senators and Congressmen feared that general aid to the schools would subject them to endless demands for more money. In this context, the idea of categorical aid as a compromise method for breaking the deadlock over federal aid to education gradually emerged. Categorical aid to disadvantaged children, whether in public or parochial schools, was constitutionally feasible and politically palatable under the "child benefit" doctrine.

Thus categorical aid and the concept of "targeting" was in the first instance the product of a long and frustrating search for a politically acceptable way to help the schools, and not the product of a search for an educationally sound method of raising the achievement levels of poor and minority children. The decision of the Catholic forces to join with the ESEA proponents opened a political window through which the federal government could pass some badly needed money to the schools. Although most state and local educators would have preferred general aid for construction and salaries, they were desperate for resources and disinclined to look the federal gift horse in the mouth. The moment arrived when many forces coalesced around a new and hopeful piece of legislation. After extended debate, ESEA and its major educational service delivery program, Title I, passed through Congress in record time.

Precisely because the legislative shape of the categorical approach was dictated primarily by politics rather than educational philosophy, however, the Congressional debate did little to clarify legislative intent or determine the way in which these categorical programs would actually be run. The flow of implementation decisions owed little to the political compromises that gave birth to the programs, and everything to the underlying assumptions of liberal educators.

Underlying Assumptions in Title I

The assumptions that shaped the implementation of the ESEA package, particularly Title I, embodied the soaring optimism of the Johnson era. The consciousness that informed that legislation, the regulations, and the administrative attitudes rested on certain beliefs, prevalent at the time, about the nature of poverty, the causes of educational failure, the relationship between money and student achievement, and the manageability of social programs. The year 1965 was a time of such flamboyant confidence in newly emerging data from the social sciences, in newly devised management techniques, and in the solvability of social problems that little time was spent worrying about possible unintended side effects.[2] Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon raised a concern about the possible negative effects of labeling children as poor and was promised by HEW officials that Title I children would not be so labeled, but his point, it seems, was swept under in the tide of Great Society ebullience.

With the distance provided by 15 years of experience, it is now possible to examine some of those inherent assumptions. Using Title I as an exemplar, this paper will identify those assumptions, assess their present day validity, and speculate on the reasons many of them have gone unexamined.

Happy Materialism

ESEA Title I, like many other Great Society Programs, was shaped by the deeply held and widely shared belief that education was a powerful way to abolish ignorance, which would in turn wipe out the remaining pockets of poverty in the United States through the creation of jobs and efforts such as Head Start, civil rights in housing, employment and voting and better health care services. It was believed that poor and disadvantaged children would be able to lift themselves up and compete in the mainstream of American life if they were provided with equal educational opportunities through a large concentration of federal funds which would compensate for inadequate state and local resources.[3]

That belief, implicit in the liberal credo of the time, was so strong that it was able to overwhelm the contrary evidence presented in the first Coleman report, which found that resources were not as unequally distributed between minority and white schools as most people assumed.[4] Although Coleman's findings regarding resource distribution have since been widely challenged, their implications were not so much attacked at the time as ignored. They had little effect on education policy. We can speculate that liberals were affronted by Coleman's conclusions because they challenged liberal belief in the malleability of social conditions; conservatives, by a challenge to their central belief in individual social mobility. For whatever reason, Coleman's findings—that unequal outcomes had more to do with family background than with school resources—were not absorbed into either the political culture or the legislative process.

After the ESEA legislation passed through Congress, the Office of Education was faced with an unfamiliar task. Having no suitable structure for the administration of a categorical program of service delivery, USOE initially lodged Title I in a general administrative unit and not in a separate program office.[5] Officials in the Office of Education had differing interpretations of the new program, some seeing it as a form of general aid and others understanding the program as compensatory and categorical in character.

War on poverty and civil rights groups soon were stung by what they regarded as a misuse of federal funds that were supposed to be supplementary to local programs and intended only for disadvantaged children. There were charges of "cheating" and suspiciousness about the motives of local educators. Pressured by these groups, the federal government began to tighten the rules governing Title I expenditures.[6] The *elan* that had accompanied the initial stages of the program began to sour a bit as federal distrust became incorporated into law and regulation.

The direct beneficiaries of Title I funds—administrators at the state, local and building level, teachers, aides, specialists, and members of parent advisory councils—soon became a powerful constituency for the idea that money, kept strictly targeted for the benefit of eligible children and no others, was the prime factor in achieving educational equity for disadvantaged children. That constituency would fight many battles to keep monies targeted and prevent federal resources from being spread over the whole school population.[7]

Strict targeting of money (and, as a consequence, the increasing segregation of the children and their teachers and aides) was linked to the idea of remediation for past inequality, which was in turn linked to "compensatory" programs, parent power, and jobs for minority parents. Education, *per se*, was not the focal point of their struggle; the proper direction of money was. Just as the initial impetus for Title I was essentially political, and not strictly educational, so also was the animating force that shaped the program's evolution in its first years. It now appears in retrospect that everyone was assuming that money would lead to results. If you could nail the money down long enough, eventually good things would happen for the disadvantaged children.

Title I money would soon become equated with those items the federal government allowed schools to purchase—special teachers, aides, auxiliary specialists, equipment and materials. In many schools, the rush of new money, or unspent money at the end of the fiscal year, led to lavish spending on items that could not really be absorbed into the educational program. All the while federal officials presumed that the mixture of purchaseable items were the essential ingredients for an educational breadloaf, with the local school supplying the yeast.

Assumptions About Poverty

The federal commitment to poor children was shaped by the concepts of poverty that were prevalent in the mid-1960's. Going through the history of that period, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that most people thought of poverty as an absolute, rather than a relative condition. There are many references in the documents to lifting up the "bottom quartile" or the bottom third of the population to the median.

In the input-oriented atmosphere of the 1960's compensatory education was not seen, in the first instance, as a way to fund a better quality of teaching and learning for disadvantaged children, but as a matter of buying "more" things (extra time, more books, desks, microscopes, etc.) It was as if education were a commodity, like a chicken or an apartment, rather than a process.

The hope of Title I was that the provision of "more" education for disadvantaged children would compensate for the past neglect and present discrimination; that they would catch up with the others because they would be guaranteed the same as other children (comparability) plus a little more (supplementary funds). The focus on poverty/eligibility/compensatory services would begin to reinforce the connections in people's minds between low income and low achievement. The new belief that poverty was not only highly correlated with but causal to poor school performance would become more and more a self-fulfilling prophecy, eventually obliterating the 19th century perception that barefoot boys could become classical scholars, and that not all rich kids were smart.

These views seem, in retrospect, overly simplistic.

The idea that poor people needed more money (or the things money could buy) is sensible enough if the need is for food, rent, or specific job training. When applied to education, however, the concept is a little less suitable. The translation of need into satisfaction becomes very complex when the mediating institutions are as complex as schools.

When applied to schooling, the absolute conception of poverty falls short for other reasons. For many poor children, the sting of poverty was a relative matter. It had to do with the fit of the other children's clothes or the size of their houses. It was often the feeling that your parents weren't respected in the community, or that the teachers didn't think you were very smart. Title I would come to reinforce those feelings for many children when they were separated out from other children to be taught down the hall by a remedial reading specialist.

As we enter the 1980's there is a growing body of research that challenges the 1960's viewpoint about poverty and its effects. Poor children, say the challengers, do less well because teachers, administrators, and policymakers expect them to do less well.[8] Leaving aside for the moment the question of whether or not there are really I.Q. differences between races, there is still the problem of why so many ghetto children don't learn to read and count. The "school improvement" researchers say they can, and point to the growing number of schools in poor communities that maintain their students on their grade level. Practitioners in these schools reject the view that poverty, broken homes, single-parent families, high transiency rates, or expectant mothers who subsist on potato chips are legitimate excuses for low school achievement.

The success of some schools and some teachers within unsuccessful schools, as well as the research arising from the "school effectiveness movement" should be carefully examined by the Congress to determine whether the assumptions about poverty inherent in the present structure foster or inhibit school success for disadvantaged children.

Assumptions About the Social Sciences

The history of ESEA reveals a vaulting optimism about new ideas from several disciplines that feed into educational thought—psychology, sociology, psychiatry, and medicine.[9] In 1965 many people believed that school psychologists, social workers, reading diagnosticians, nurses, and measurement experts would be able to complement the work of teachers in ways that would overcome the "deficiencies" that had been identified by these disciplines. Indeed, the idea of deficiencies, both social and individual, was the substratum of social thinking of that period. Title I permitted, even encouraged, the employment of these specialists and the ideas they carried with them.

The language used to anticipate the interplay between specialists and teachers was borrowed from medicine—pathology, diagnosis, prescription, treatment, remediation—suggesting that the deficiencies were to be found in the heads and bodies of individual children and their parents, and not in the teacher, the school, or the curriculum. This way of looking at things tended to result in children with various problems being separated out from others just as ill people are hospitalized for treatment.

The medical model, as applied to education, can be seen as a metaphor for the world view of the 1960's poverty warriors. In federal education service programs, the new cadre of social scientists eager to help the disadvantaged went off to the schools with the blessings of their professional groups and the United States government. They arrived on the scene with a linear approach that focused on the individual child and his undetected pathology. Diagnosis was done with tests and interviews with the individual child. He was seldom observed in a natural context—the classroom or the home. Poverty was the generic disease, but the diagnosis involved various manifestations of the disease—"emotional disturbance," 'hyperactivity," "perceptual deficits" or immaturity. If the expert made any recommendation at all, it was usually a general prescription, such as "smaller class," or "individualized instruction", or more "personal attention." Reports on students seldom contained an analysis of the child's strengths on which the teacher could build a teaching strategy. Teachers rarely got any specific advice about the "Monday morning" ramifications of the deficiency. The power structure did not encourage specialists to comment on the teacher's competence, the school curriculum, the school district's budget, or any other factors that might have prevented the recommended treatment from being carried out.

Before the psychological sciences rose to prominence in educational circles, being "behind" in school was seen as a position relative to other children who were "ahead." The arrival of the era of educational diagnosis, however, would cause many teachers, who were ever respectful of their assumed intellectual betters, to see children who were "behind" in school as having a condition rather than a position. That condition had to do with certain dark forces in the human mind, which were not thought to be alterable by group-oriented teaching within the regular classroom. Diagnosis tended to arrest thought, or to stop effort.

What was not understood in 1965 was that the new disciplines were themselves part of the social and political system. There was an overemphasis upon the individual and an underemphasis on the ecology of the classroom. There was a tendency to "blame the system." While the enlightenment about individual human characteristics that emerged from these disciplines would be helpful to education in some ways, the concepts emerging from that formulation would cause harm by an overemphasis on the individual and the negative, and a failure to address the systemic and the positive.

While there can be no doubt that a nurse who spots a medical problem and garners community resources to solve it is very useful, and no one can quibble with a school social worker who takes a myopic child to get eyeglasses or an unshod child to the shoestore, the role of the specialists becomes very complex when one moves from the realm of the physical to the psychological.

School psychologists, for example, are most typically pre-doctoral persons with little clinical experience. They are better equipped to administer mental and psychological tests than to interpret them for the benefit of teachers, or work jointly with those teachers to develop classroom strategies based on psychological findings.

Reading diagnosticians, to take another example, are believed by many to be practitioners of a science that can detect the causes of reading failure and recommend useful strategies for teachers. Studies recently conducted at the Institute for Research on Teaching at Michigan State University, however, would suggest that reading diagnostics is far from being a science. Highly regarded reading diagnosticians reached widely varying conclusions on the same cases, and even contradicted their own findings very often when presented with disguised duplicate cases.[10]

There is little doubt that knowledge from other disciplines can be useful to education, but much more needs to be known about the relevance of various disciplines to classroom settings and teacher quandries. Based on his research, Lawrence Lezotte at Michigan State has concluded that most teacher training programs have "drawn too much of their curricular content from the discipline of psychology and have not drawn enough of their content from other relevant disciplines, especially sociology." Noting that psychology, as a discipline, is oriented toward the study of individuals, Lezotte says: "There is nothing more tragic than watching a beginning teacher try to utilize psychological concepts and principles appropriate for an individual to a group of 28 students or try to organize the group of 28 students so that they can work with one student at a time." Lezotte also points out the power of sociological insights to improve student motivation and learning, citing research on group learning games.[11]

Assumptions About Management

In 1965, the success of Program Planning and Budgeting Systems (PPBS) in Secretary McNamara's Department of Defense led many people to believe that sophisticated new management systems would improve efficiency and productivity in other public bureaucracies, including education. Although the ESEA legislation did not officially incorporate PPBS into law, the assumptions that undergirded PPBS found their way into the managerial posture of the federal government. But the widespread faith in "good management" was misplaced.

The new management systems (such as PPBS, Management by Objectives, and, later, Zero-Based Budgeting) assume that an institution is like a product-oriented, corporate pyramid. They assume reasonable spans of control, clear lines of control and communication between levels and layers, and above all specific, measureable goals. Even in 1965, theorists of the new management approaches said that goals were the linchpin of their schemes, but the federal government was reluctant to become the national educational goal-setter. The federal ideal, in a general sense, was to assure that a child educated in rural Mississippi would be able to function in Cleveland, but there were no specific educational goals established as the centerpiece for the federal educational programs such as Title I.

Some federal officials hoped that State Departments of Education would fill the gap, setting the goals that the U.S. Office of Education could not or would not formulate. There was an awareness that the State Educational Agencies were weak and, for that reason, ESEA made provisions for "strengthening" State Departments of Education. Federally funded personnel in the state agencies were to formulate state plans, review local plans, monitor local programs, process reports to the federal government, and measure student achievement. What was apparently not understood at the time was that State Departments of Education were weak for inherent reasons. State Boards and State Superintendents were generally appointed, not elected. They ran no schools, and therefore had no significant power to allocate resources. Local school boards, on the other hand, were elected, levied taxes, and allocated benefits to school patrons. State agencies had been traditionally shy in asserting their constitutional authority over education because they lacked real power. Even with the infusion of federal funds, the state education departments would continue to be timid partners of the federal government and reluctant dragons to the locals. Except in highly organized states, goal setting would be kept to the most lofty level, and there would be few if any consequences for schools or school districts that failed to meet the goals. How, after all, could the state tell the locality what to do when the local taxpayers supported the schools and elected their own local policymakers?

Because of this abnegation and the compliance orientation in Washington, over time the federal government's management approach evolved into an intricate and burdensome reporting system designed to measure the degree to which federal money went to poor children in poor neighborhoods. It did not have any specific *educational* goals for those poor children, and even though it developed requirements for reporting their educational progress, there was no penalty for educational failure—only a penalty for various lapses in the targeting of money to target children. Without the most essential piece of the new management theory—educational goals—the federal management of Title I and other categorical programs became consumed with process and bereft of educational substance.

The federal government was not alone in its infatuation with modern management techniques. State and local educators made repeated efforts to use the systems-oriented approaches. The results were meagre and short-lived. (Test data, gathered to inform the policymaking process at the school district level, was frequently unsuitable for policy analysis and equally unsuitable for use by teachers.) The most visible result of those attempts to extend such information-oriented systems to the school-building level has been to add to the paperwork burdens of school staffs, particularly principals. Instead of functioning as instructional leaders and teacher trainers, they spend far too much of their time filling out forms and writing proposals.

Despite all of these mechanistic approaches to improving educational management, the nation's schools are still unsure of their goals, and still very unlikely to connect planning and funding with educational success or failure. Despite the talk about management, the past fifteen years have brought little serious effort to improve the overall quality of educational leadership. Intelligently planned and coordinated in-service training for teachers is rare enough; for principals and supervisors—despite the smorgasbord of individual courses and programs—sophisticated career development has been almost totally absent.

Federal programs such as Title I contribute to and reinforce this situation in several ways—by increasing paperwork demands under the spur of audit problems, by draining managerial time and talent into the creation and maintenance of special programs, and by diverting in-service dollars and attention toward those marginal programs, and away from the core academic programs of the school. At the same time, the disappearance of promising early federal efforts to improve the quality of educational personnel, plus the teacher glut of the past decade, has further increased a trend toward educational particularism.

Assumptions About the Concentration of Poverty

Another assumption imbedded in the categorical approach was that concentrations of poor and minority children create a concentration of negative effects. That circumstance, the theory goes, requires a critical mass of resources to combat the problems.[12] That belief, when combined with the federal government's desire to conserve scarce resources and account to the public for its expenditures, led to successive refinements in the federal concept of "targeting," and to increasingly restrictive regulations.

During the early years of Title I, the Congressional intent was not fully explicit and the U.S. Office of Education had not yet geared its administrative structure toward the categorical approach. Some school districts used Title I money to support Title I schools, freeing local monies for other non-eligible schools. A series of structural provisions were added to the law in subsequent years to ensure that school districts maintained their existing level of effort rather than substitute federal funds for local ones; to ensure that school level services in Title I schools were comparable to the level in non-Title I schools; and to ensure that funds directed toward particular eligible students in Title I schools supplemented, rather than supplanted local funds.[13] Later on, Congress added the "excess cost" requirement to the others, stipulating that Title I money must only be used for services beyond the ordinary instructional program.

Effects of Assumptions

All of these provisions would come to be seen by federal officials through an idealistic focus. The stringent effort to make sure local school districts didn't "cheat", the belief that federal vigilance was an essential protection against local politics and the callousness or downright bigotry of local school officials, became a part of the lore of Washington. Local educational officials bristled at each new federal regulation and tended toward a petulant stance.

Early on, the adult beneficiaries of Title I—state and local administrators, Title I teachers and aides, auxiliary personnel, members of parent advisory councils, and local civil rights groups became the natural constituency of Title I. They lobbied successfully to excuse Title I teachers from school-wide chores like lunch duty, bus duty, and playground duty.[14] It was argued that such tasks involved the supervision of non-eligible children, thereby supplanting local funds which would have ordinarily been used for that purpose.

The problem is that many of these restrictions ignore the culture of the school and create distinctions that are both arbitrary and capricious.

The accretion of rules, all designed to insure the integrity of federal funds, has resulted in the strict segregation of textbooks and equipment within schools, with Title I books and Title I mimeograph machines being forbidden to other children in the school. It has resulted in children being pulled out of their regular classes at inopportune moments to receive "special" instruction. It has even resulted in the labelling of Title I paste pots. Districts have abolished class field trips because the Title I auditors would not allow the non-Title I children to ride free with the Title I children (violation of "supplement not supplant") nor would they allow the non-Title I children to be paid for out of local funds (violation of "comparability").[*]

Special privileges accorded Title I teachers and aides have resulted in corrosive status divisions within faculties. Those working on federal funds have also been discriminated against, sometimes being denied tenure. "Title" teachers have tended to give their loyalties to the vertical column of educators running through the district central office, the state department of education, and the U.S. Department of Education, rather than to the horizontal layer of fellow faculty.

While the framers of ESEA and the managers of subsequent reauthorizations have feared that any local actions which diluted the federal dosage would hurt the children most in need, they do not appear to have been concerned that the segregation of children, teachers, materials, and loyalties would weaken the dosage supplied by the basic school program where the Title I children spent most of their days.

Finally, there is little evidence that the federal officials have seriously confronted the evidence about the power of expectancy. As ESEA has become institutionalized, many thoughtful practitioners have become concerned about the depressing effects of the categorical programs, particularly Title I, upon teacher expectations for children. The conspicious segregation of poor and low-achieving children, combined with "child deficit" and "social deficit" thinking, has created a powerful set of excuses for keeping poor and minority children down. "Low-income families," "broken homes," "single-parent families," high transiency rates have become easy explanations for why "target" children are years behind in reading and math. Society has come to expect that those children cannot learn as other children do.

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[*] Under this interpretation of the comparability rules, local funds should either be used to pay for *all* children (including Title I students), or none.

Since eligible children within individual schools are chosen on the basis of low achievement (and the law encourages that only those with the greatest need be served), there is an additional financial disincentive to expect much and achieve well. If all the children in a Title I school were to miraculously start achieving on grade level, the school would lose its extra positions and materials after a year's grace period. If some of the children improve, they face the prospect of being "promoted" out of Title I services.

The federal assumption that concentrations of poor children produce a concentration of problems still appears to be a valid assumption in the vast majority of circumstances. Yet a few schools here and there are producing average or superior results with poor ghetto kids or poor rural kids. Although the number of such cases is still quite small, the existence of these schools would suggest that assumptions about the concentration of poverty problems are not immutably true. A serious redesign of federal categorical programs should include an analysis of incentives and disincentives, status issues within schools, and the powerful role of expectations.

Federal Non-Interference in Curriculum

Another underlying assumption of federal categorical programs is that they do not influence the curriculum. Passing out money and accounting for it is thought to be completely separate from the control of curriculum. Federal officials need to believe that. If it were not so, they would be faced with a prickly constitutional question about the federal role in education. They see the federal role as a modest effort in technical assistance or as a *major* financial assistance.

By the narrowest definition of curriculum, federal categorical programs leave the school districts free to define the program of studies, the books, and the teaching methods. However, any definition of curriculum which includes the time spent on various subjects, the daily schedule, the exposure of children to peer influences, the social system of the school or the effects of testing upon what is taught, would strain the federal claim of non-interference in curricular matters.

This studious federal effort not to "interfere" in curriculum has been heightened, oddly, by the sorry fate of efforts to evaluate the success of categorical programs.

A federal requirement for program evaluations was written into the law in 1965. States were required to report on the progress of children in federal categorical programs. Since the early years of the program, most of the evaluation money has been passed on to the states, which have—under federal prodding—emphasized a relatively narrow view of program success. The evaluation program has concentrated on the "basics", and has developed into a fairly basic interpretation of the "basics".

Although measuring the effects of publicly funded programs in education is a sound idea, the nature and effects of the present measurement system bear some close Congressional scrutiny. Measuring the most narrowly measurable things may result in teaching on a very low level--little bitty books with tiny little words in order to pass very simple tests. The primitive state of the art of measurement, when combined with low expectations and financial disincentives, can severely inhibit the schools from trying innovative ways to stretch the children out.

The problem of test-controlling the curriculum is hardly a federal problem. It is an issue at every level of the educational system. But a careful review of categorical programs and their evaluative features ought to include an analysis of the effects of very circumscribed evaluation efforts upon the whole attempt, and a determined reach for higher standards and broader evaluation strategies.

Assumptions About Parent Involvement

Initially the framers of ESEA gave the Commissioner of Education discretionary authority to establish parent advisory councils at the school district level.[15] Eventually Congress incorporated the parent advisory structure into law, mandating both district and school level councils. Ultimately, even the number of members and the frequency of meetings were legislated. Civil rights groups lobbied successfully for an adversarial style of parent involvement. Parents were to watchdog the program to make sure it was well designed.

The record does not show whether those who mandated parent advisory councils believed that the requirement for consultation and sign-off would evolve into some form of school-site democracy, but it is clear that they believed it to be "an important means of increasing the effectiveness of programs."[16] There is no evidence to suggest that they anticipated the ease with which local school officials could co-opt the PACs. Parents were given a number of perquisites, such as occasional trips to conventions and baby-sitting money, but no real power. Such status in the community as could be derived from membership on the PACs was more honorary than substantial. In 1965, the role allotted to parents was as much as local school officials would stand for.

Giving due credit for good intentions, it now seems that the role of parent "involvement" (left undefined) was primarily a political rather than an educational move. Although it was conceived as a check and balance against the presumably unsympathethic local school officials who were dominated, then and now, by the majoritarian characteristics of local school politics, the federal mandate for parental participation has not been effective. In fact, recent findings indicate the "the creators of the mandated groups not only control their actions; they determine the system of representation and often select the members and even leaders of these organizations; and that the leaders and members of these organizations are the least policy oriented."[17] In short, PACs have been treated as a political problem, and isolated as a political threat, by school systems that have felt threatened by the adversarial style many PACs adopted.

If the advocacy function of PAC's has been effectively nullified by the very federal mandate that was intended to enhance it, there remains the "service" function that parents can perform for the schools. 'Service" can involve representing other parents' views to school authorities—or service can be defined as doing relatively menial chores around the school—running dittos, serving food, etc. Finally, "service" can be defined as helping children learn—either in or out of school—and that vision of service, while it lacks the pungent political appeal of the 1970's style of advocacy, may be the most direct line to improving educational quality as well as equity. Although many school principals have been able to redirect the energies of the PAC toward the reinforcement of children's learning, it has been in spite of rather than because of the federal posture toward parent involvement.

During the forthcoming authorization process, Congress should thoughtfully consider whether the benefits of watchdogging, particularly without real power, outweigh the benefits of collaboration around educational goals. In a recent article in the *Phi Delta Kappan*, Benjamin Bloom cites the research on the significance of parents' roles in the development of language, encouragement of children to learn, aspirations of parents for their children, and provision of help when needed.[18] Recent attempts to alter these home variables suggest that it can be done, and is a powerful strategy.[19] But that approach is far away from the present adversarial role encouraged by federal statute and attitude.

If Congress feels that it cannot give up on the struggle to empower parents of children who are among the unloved, unappreciated, or untaught, then it should look at the alternative process laid out in P.L. 94-142, which gives parents built-in due process and sign-off rights on the Individual Education Plan.

The Evolution of Categorical Programs

The assumptions that appear to have shaped Title I, the oldest and largest of the categorical programs, have also tended to fix the pattern for subsequent categorical service programs. The structural provisions designed to segregate the money (and the children as a consequence) from the regular school program are present. They are all constructed on the "service delivery" model, with a disproportionate emphasis on material resources and an inherent tilt toward a "child deficit" or "social deficit" world view.

There are, however, discernible differences in the more recently enacted categorical programs that reflect a small change in the political and educational consciousness of the Congress. Even in the most recent authorization of Title I, there is evidence of a slight movement toward a more holistic view of education.

The Bilingual Education Act, for example, differs from Title I in two important respects. First, it deals with the substance of what eligible children are to learn (English). Secondly, it provides funding for research into the critical area of language acquisition—a potential benefit to all children.

The most recent major categorical program, P.L. 94-142, expresses a further departure from the assumptions of Title I. As noted earlier, parents are given specific powers relating to the education of their own children. Also, the "medical model" is more implicitly rejected, perhaps because the handicapped have been more victimized by it than any other group of citizens. In the mandate to provide handicapped children with the "least restrictive environment" and the push toward "mainstreaming," the law seems to recognize the relationship between socialization with peers and academic progress. It is ironic that some poor minority children with normal intelligence are being pulled out of regular classes several times a day to partake of various supplementary services while some handicapped children with a degree of mental insufficiency are sitting in regular classrooms all day. Such a conceptual nightmare begs for some thoughtful consideration by the best thinkers in the nation.

Title I has recently inched toward recognition of the importance of the schools as a whole in the *instrumentation* of instruction. Title I teachers will no longer be exempt from their share of general school duties. In a half-hearted recognition of the value of whole-school planning, a "whole school" option is now possible, albeit with the approval of the Secretary of Education and requirement that there be at least 70% eligible Title I children in the school. The forthcoming guidelines are said to include "can do" as well as "don't do" language, illustrating ways that a school can conduct in-school Title I programs and avoid "pull-out" strategies.

These slight shifts seem to be in response to a growing chorus of local school officials, many with impeccable credentials in civil rights, who are critical of the educational impact of categorical programs.

Item: A creative superintendent in a very poor northeastern city says: "Federal programs are based on a pathology model. You have to have something wrong with you to get into them. The federal government doesn't give money to treat the mainstream of education from which the children are pulled. How do they expect the kids to go back into the regular program which failed them in the first place?"

Item: In a battered old school house in south Texas, four "Title" teachers work in four temporary but opulent classrooms parked on the four corners of the building. They work in air-conditioned comfort and are surrounded by a glut of new and sophisticated materials and equipment. Meanwhile, the teacher in the regular classroom works in unbearable heat with books that are tattered and ethnocentric. Most of the children are Chicano migrant workers. The teacher cannot keep track of which kids missed which lesson since most of the children are pulled out three and four times a day. The assistant superintendent wishes he could have the whole pot of federal money and design an integrated instructional program for all the children. At a minimum, he would like just a little money to hold after school or Saturday workshops for his teachers so they could agree on instructional objectives for all classes and programs. He believes that approach would minimize some of the fragmentation caused by categorical programs.

These examples illustrate some of the problems inherent in targeting aid to low-status children. The Washington viewpoint—that money should go only to the children most in need—sounds so reasonable, but in the context of all the other factors that are operating in the school, it seems to inhibit the progress of the very children the Congress intends to help. Elizabeth VanderPutten, now with the NIE school finance study project, writes:

> "One of the fundamental impediments to the implementation of federal policy appears to be found in the conflict of the two cultures. The culture of the school, whether at the elementary, secondary, or college level differs fundamentally from the culture of the government whether at the local, state or federal . . . The school, for example, tends to emphasize the individual, the intellectual, the long term. The government tends to emphasize society's needs, equity, and the short term."[20]

After 15 years of operation, Title I can now claim that most Title I children are making a month's educational progress for each month in the program. Many people are proud of that outcome. The fact is, however, that most of those children are several years behind their peers in reading and math. Students who graduated from high school with elementary level reading and math skills, or who drop out because school seems so difficult, have little chance to become full-blown American citizens, whether in the economic or civic arena. To be satisfied with the current level of academic attainment is to accept the belief that these children can only do that well and no better.

The Categorical Jungle

As if the problems associated with one categorical program were not enough, the situation in schools with more than one program is becoming increasingly desperate. There are conflicts between the regulations of the several programs. In an era of declining resources, numerous duplications and overlaps between and among the categorical programs, the base program suffers from inattention and is beset with frequent interruptions. At the federal level, there is already considerable awareness of the problem, but remedies seem very slow in coming.

The prospect of general federal aid to education seems remote. Not only does it pose constitutional problems; in the current fiscal climate, it would seem politically beyond consideration. Grants consolidation is another proposed remedy, and that has considerable appeal to those who worry about the paperwork burden and the continuing problem of oversight through monitoring and auditing. If, however, the assumptions of ESEA are rooted in another era and are educationally unsound, grants consolidation would be an act of legislative laziness which would perpetuate the faulty assumptions. A better way out, it would seem, is a fundamental re-analysis of the federal role in elementary and secondary education. The idea of categorical programs may still be a useful strategy, and the current manifestation of the categorical idea is not written in concrete. Nor is the "child benefit" doctrine *a priori* incompatible with less restricted forms of aid.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Federal categorical programs were an educational by-product of a political expedient, designed to secure the passage of ESEA. They reflected and continue to reflect the general *Zeitgeist* of the 1960's. The Congress and the federal government can be justifiably proud of the changes in education ethos that have come about largely through their efforts in the field of civil rights, equal opportunity, and compensatory programs for those members of our society that had been, and continue to be, disadvantaged through the actions of the majority. The existence of so many state and local compensatory programs, above and beyond those provided and required by the federal government, is good witness to the revolution in intentions that has taken place over the last 15 years, narrowing the gap between the cultures of the schools and the federal government. Those intentions, however, have not resulted in a significant narrowing of the gaps in educational achievement between the rich and the poor.

Although a number of evaluations of Title I have been conducted by the National Institute of Education, the assumptions that form the warp and woof of federal categorical programs (and the state and local ones that tend to be modelled on federal efforts) have not been rigorously challenged at the policymaking level. Dysfunctional structures and belief systems have gone, for the most part, unchallenged, in the main, because the groups of adults that directly benefit from these programs—bureaucrats, parent advisory council members, minority group leaders—have exercised their political muscle out of understandable self interest and out of the belief that these programs would ultimately benefit their special interest group.

The proliferation of these programs, each with their supporting interest group, has created an educational environment more concerned with who gets federal education money than with the education gotten. Programs such as Title I have had effects that have been both unforeseen and damaging. The basic school program, where eligible children spend most of their day, has tended to be structurally unrelated to the special programs, and both basic and supplementary programs have been impoverished as a result. Those students who were already isolated from the mainstream community have become further isolated. The belief systems of the several professions that define the character of American education have ignored the power of expectancy on learning. Somehow, our good intentions have gone awry, and it is time to look again.

Avoiding a major revolution in public education may require a minor revolution in policy direction from the federal level. A serious redirection of federal effort will necessitate a stripping away of the Washington myth that the federal government does not interfere with curriculum. The entire concept of "supplement versus supplant" is out of place with regard to education programming and curriculum. Categorical programs should not supplement the local programs, that is they should not be added on to what already exists, creating some three-legged aberration expected to better serve students in need. Rather than supplementation, *the concept of integration of programs into the overall curriculum* should be introduced at the local level.

If influence on long term societal needs is truly the goal of federal government, then it does no good to maintain that categorical programs do not influence what is taught in the schools. The plain fact is that curriculum is currently influenced at the local level by federal programs.

That being the case, then let us begin to discuss methods to ensure that programmatic changes will be controlled at the local level. Local curriculum developers should be required to plan for integration of programs to determine how best to utilize federal funding, by category of student if necessary, but always integrating programs into the overall educational program. Doing this will require a more holistic view of schools and schooling, and a much more vigorous and effective strategy to identify and disseminate successful school programs. More research is needed—research which is of practical use to teachers, principals and school district administrators and policymakers. Most importantly, the U.S. Congress needs to declare its intention to promote higher standards in educational achievement, and do it in language that will make clear that "High Standards" are not elitist code words but a national aspiration for all children.

How Federal Categorical Programs Might Be Organized

In declaring national educational goals, the Congress and the Secretary of Education would be exercising moral leadership in addition to announcing program requirements. The states, however, would be required to establish goals and standards as a precondition for receiving federal educational monies. Integration of federal and state educational goals, providing some structure with meaningful scope and sequence, would reinforce the school district's effort to reduce fragmentation of federal, state and local programs and would result in a more coordinated delivery of educational services at the school level.

The present categorical structure, divided according to various classes of children seen to be in need of federal protection, could be maintained at the federal level in order to preserve identifiable power centers and technical assistance mechanisms for those subgroups with unique needs. Service programs for poor and educationally disadvantaged children (Title I), for handicapped children (P.L. 94-142), for children in newly desegregated schools (Emergency School Assistance Act), and for children with limited English-speaking ability (Bilingual Education Act) could be kept intact. The states would receive formula and discretionary funding based on their accounting of need in the several categories. The federal government could continue to control the distribution of federal funds to the states, the school district, and the individual school site so as to ensure that federal funds were directed toward schools with the highest percentages of children with greater needs.

Once the money got to the schoolhouse door, however, all federal compensatory education funds would be consolidated. The school would be required to develop a whole-school plan for the utilization of the federal funds. The federal government could require the whole-school plan to include complementary (rather than supplementary) programs for students with identified needs. A faculty training component would be a requirement (as opposed to "Title" staff only). The school plan would be subject to a formal external critique according to a process designed by the states and the school districts.

Schools that failed to accomplish the established goals would be subject to a loss of federal funds unless they could demonstrate that a new school-wide plan could reasonably be expected to succeed. Technical assistance in planning and staff training could be provided to schools that had failed to meet the goals.

The federal/state monitoring and auditing process would focus more on school improvement than is currently the case. An Individual Education Plan for all students (not just the handicapped) identified as needing extra assistance could be a federal requirement, and the judgements of monitors and auditors would be based on the relationship between those plans and student achievement. Program monitors from state agencies would assist school-site faculties by making them aware of successful programs elsewhere, and arrange for school visits and faculty exchanges.

The federal government could make maximum use of its unique advantage—a national perspective. States and school districts hunger for perspective. The Department of Education could invest much more of its resources into the identification and dissemination of successful practices, good curriculum, and useful research findings. The present technical assistance programs are too small and too structurally separate from the operating categorical programs. The two functions need to be integrated and made more robust.

Another unique federal role is in the funding of educational research. Unfortunately, research falls low on the priority list of many federal policymakers. It does not have much of a national constituency. But if we are to solve our national educational problems, we need to know more about teaching and learning, and we need to organize new knowledge in ways that are useful to practitioners in schools.

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The conflicting views on the nature of the federal role in education came to the surface during the long and bitter debate over whether to create a new U.S. Department of Education. Ultimately the proponents of the new Department prevailed—at least for a time. However, the drafters of the establishing legislation for the Department took special (and unsuccessful) pains to ease the fears of those who saw in a Cabinet-level Department of Education the precurser of a centralized, domineering "ministry of education" on the European model.

These special pains took two forms: unusually strong admonitory language, both in the bill creating the Department and in the accompanying Congressional committee reports, that restated the limited nature of the federal role and the privacy of state and local power in education; and the creation of a watchdog Intergovernmental Advisory Council on Education (IACE).

The following section includes parts of the Report on the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee on the Senate's version of the Department of Education Organization Act, as well as remarks by Arthur E. Wise to the first meeting of the IACE. Wise, a RAND Corporation analyst, was one of the drafters of the IACE section of the enabling act.*

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* Senate Report 96–49, "Department of Education Organization Act of 1979 (S. 210)," March, 1979.

Improving the Federal Government's Responsibilities in Education

PROBLEMS IN AMERICAN EDUCATION

The Committee's consideration of Department of Education legislation comes at a time when problems in Amercian education are particularly serious.

While Americans continue to strongly believe in education as the key to success and fulfillment, their confidence in the capabilities of our educational institutions continues to fall. Recent polls continue to show that more than half of the public feels the quality of education in our schools is declining.

With the decline in confidence comes a decline in educational awareness and interest, and a drop-off of parent involvement in the schools.

This low level of confidence stems from a variety of sources. Achivement and college entrance test scores show a persistent, long decline over the last decade. More and more students are found to enter college with deficiencies in basic skills. Many colleges and universities are resorting to their own basic skills tests and brush-up courses.

Recent Federal studies have shown students are becoming more disillusioned with their public schools. Student absenteeism is on the rise. There is a shocking escalation in vandalism. A large number of teachers are either hurt or killed each year by violent students. The schools are losing their ability to be instruments of social change by this disillusionment.

School officials continue to be perplexed by the problem of reconciling declining enrollments and increasing costs. As the birth rate in the U.S. continues its steady downturn, inflation has driven up the cost of educating children. Instead of being able to save money where fewer students are attending school, a local school district today is actually paying more than before.

A disturbing result of this lack of confidence is the rebellion of many American taxpayers against taxes to finance public education. Bond issues are being defeated in record numbers. Many States are being forced to totally change their methods of financing public schools because of orders handed down by the courts. States and localities spend the greatest amount of their budgets—approximately 40 percent—for education.

These problems are serious, but there is no coordinated effort from the Federal level to help localities. While a Department of Education in and of itself could not solve education's tremendous problems, its primary purpose will be to supplement the States' and localities' efforts to deal with these problems.

A Federal Department of Education should *not directly* improve American education. It is not intended to do so, because that is really the province and duty of the States and localities. However, the Committee believes better organization and management of Federal education programs will better assist States and localities to improve education for students. In the long run, the level of confidence might rise and parents will take a more active role in helping their local school districts fulfill their job.

The Committee believes the Department of Education will have a positive, beneficial, *indirect* effect on improving American education and assisting parents and educators in the drive for educational improvement.

A Legitimate Federal Role

The Federal government has been involved in education for more than a century. It has reacted responsibly in meeting needs when States, localities, and private institutions had difficulty meeting them. The obvious examples are the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the National Defense Education Act. In all cases, Congress has been careful to stick to the Constitutionally-backed principle that the Federal role is limited to supplementing, not supplanting, State and local prerogatives and rights in determining their individual educational program.

The Federal role in education, therefore, is a legitimate but restrained one. Today, there are important Federal policies and programs to aid education in the United States. They include:

Guaranteeing equal access to educational opportunities;

Conducting and disseminating comprehensive research into new ideas, trends, or problems in education;

Providing assistance to States and localities for educating the handicapped or disadvantaged;

Providing valuable complementary financial assistance to States and localities so as to insure the people are receiving a quality education; and

Maintaining significant higher education loan and grant programs to open doors for all students desiring to continue their education beyond public school.

This role has grown from the $400 million budgeted for the U.S. Office of Education in 1953 when HEW was created, to more than $25 billion today, scattered about 40 different Federal agencies. The budget of the Education Division of HEW—which will make up the core of the new Department—alone exceeds $13 billion, which is more than the budgets of five existing Cabinet departments (State, Justice, Commerce, Interior, and Energy).

The Federal activity in supporting education is of such a sufficiently large magnitude and size as to justify independent Cabinet status. Its activities are given strong popular support by the American public. It is too important to be mismanaged or denigrated within the Federal government structure.

State and Local Responsibilities for Education

The Committee carefully considered the question of whether the Department means Federal interference in or dominance of State and local policymaking. States and their political subdivisions have the constitutional right to determine their own education needs and policies. The bill reinforces this principle.

Amendments introduced last year by Senators Roth and Danforth addressed this concern. These amendments are contained in the present bill and have been further refined. Hearings held by the Committee this year focused particularly on the question of the effect of the establishment of the Department on education decisionmaking at the State and local level and on whether the establishment of the Department would mean more Federal control. Various groups testifying before the Committee specifically directed their comments to this area. Organizations testifying included the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National School Boards Association, the National Governor's Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Association of

State Boards of Education, and the Education Commission of the States.

James McIntyre, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, commented that the Department would not change the Federal government's role in education. There has long been a tradition in the United States for local control of education. S. 210 recognizes this principle and recognizes that the Department's responsibility is to enforce existing laws and administer existing programs more effectively.

The creation of a Department of Education is supported by State and local groups who say they fear more Federal intrusion will be caused by the existing fragmented, uncoordinated, unaccountable, and low-level bureaucracy.

The hearings before the Committee highlighted this view that the establishment of the Department would, in effect, be a check on Federal encroachment. Mr. McIntyre stated:

> *** with the establishment of such a Department and making the Secretary or the educational programs more accountable, along with the greater visibility * * * there would be greater and public debate about any type of either perceived or proposed changes in (the) Federal role.

Commissioner Boyer commented further:

> My best judgment is that in fact (the Department) will help protect against (encroachment). What I see now are decisions that are going on every day * * * regulations are being written * * * The lack of clarity and structure, the lack of clear and fixed accountability I think lead to the prospect of more entanglements and not less.

S. 210 underlines the unique relationship of the Federal government with States and localities in the area of education. The findings and purposes state clearly the intent of the Department with respect to the responsibilities of governmental entities and public and nonpublic agencies. The bill recognizes the primary responsibility for education has in the past, and must continue in the future, to reside with States, localities, public and nonpublic educational institutions, communities and families. It distinguishes responsibilities in our Federal system by stating the primary public responsibility for education is reserved respectively to the states, the local school systems and other instrumentalities of the States, and tribal governments. It recognizes that one of the chief purposes of the Department is to supplement and complement the efforts of States and localities and public and nonpublic institutions to improve the quality of education.

Section 103 of the bill specifically addresses the Committee's intention with respect to the establishment of the Department and the role of the Department with respect to State and local administration of education programs and policies. The Committee accepted an amendment introduced by Senator Roth which explicitly states the establishment of the Department "shall not increase the authority of the Federal Governemnt over education or diminish the responsibility for education which is reserved to the States, the local school systems and other instrumentalities of the States, and tribal governments." Section 103 further clarifies the intent of the Congress with respect to establishing the Department to protect the"rights of State, local and tribal governments and public and nonpublic educational institutions in the areas of educational policies and administration of programs, including but not limited to competency testing and selection of curricula and program content, and to strengthen and improve the control of such governments and institutions over their own educational programs and policies." Section 103 also ensures that the transfer of any programs to the Department does not require any particular organization of related programs or administrative networks at the state level.

Lucille Maurer, Chair of the Education Committee of the National Conference of State Legislatures, testified before the Committee on the importance for the Department to have a "strong institutional capacity to integrate its activities with education activities at the State and local level . . . it must be structured in a way that will guarantee day-to-day sensitivity to education policymaking . . . NCSL believes that this could be accomplished most effectively by charging the Under Secretary with responsibility for intergovernmental relations." Most State and local organizations agreed with this concept. The Committee responded to this suggestion by placing the responsibilities for the intergovernmental relations of the Department with the Under Secretary. The Committee has directed the Under Secretary to assure the Department carries out its functions in a manner which supplements and complements the education policies, programs and procedures of States and localities. The Under Secretary is also mandated to assure that appropriate officials within the Department consult with State and local education policy-makers concerning differences over education policies, programs and procedures and concerning the impact of the Department's rules and regulations on the States and localities.

S. 210 also includes an Intergovernmental Advisory Council on Education. The Council would act as a check on the Department of Education for the impact of its programs on States and localities.

The Council will advise the Secretary and the President on intergovernmental problems, progress, and concerns regarding education and intergovernmental relations.

Appointed to the Council by the President would be 24 nonpartisan representatives from State and local governments. State and local educational agencies and private citizens, including citizens, students and nonpublic institution representatives. The Under Secretary would also be a member.

The effectiveness of most Federal programs depends upon the delivery of the service of those programs at the State or local level where the Federal Government has limited authority. The widely-scattered education programs have caused confusion for State, local, and private agencies with respect to fragmentation and duplication at the Federal level. State agencies must deal with a myriad of agencies at the Federal level which often result in excessive amounts of paperwork requirements. The Council will provide a mechanism for involving those affected by the Department's policies to facilitate intergovernmental coordination.

The Council is not intended to be a buffer between the Secretary of Education and the President or Congress, nor is it expected to be involved in the day-to-day operations of the Department or in the annual budget process. Its role is advisory in helping the Department work toward the attainment of Federal, State, and local educational objectives. Its focus should be upon the long-term health of the intergovernmental system for managing education.

Citizen Involvement

The Committee intends that citizen participation in the implementation of Federal education programs be a major function of the Department. S. 210 defines as one of the major functions of the Department "monitoring parental and public participation in programs where such participation is required by law, and encouraging the involvement of parents, students, and the public in the development and implementation of departmental programs."

Rev. Jesse Jackson's testimony before the Committee emphasized the necessity of parent, student and community involvement in the educational process:

> Presently education is too isolated from these elements and the

> result is obvious and devastating in numerous ways—from increased vandalism to lower academic achievement to the weakening of public financial support for public education * * * the recognition that parent, citizen and student involvement must play a major role and function in a new department for it to be successful and to rebuild the lost confidence in education is of vital importance.

In testimony before the committee last year, Dr. Carl Marburger, director of the National Committee for Citizens in Education, stated the importance of citizen participation for increasing confidence in shcools and children's educational abilities. Lack of confidence in public schools is alarming. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, the percentage of people with "hardly any confidence in people running education" has nearly doubled from 1973 to 1976.

NOTES ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Arthur E. Wise*

Some Dilemmas Facing the Federal Government

Certain dilemmas face the federal government as it seeks to make policy for education:

(1) The federal government is accused of implementing regulations with a heavy hand by some.
  . . . of failing to fully implement regulations by others.
(2) It is accused of building in too much flexibility by some.
  . . . of failing to be responsive to local conditions by others.
(3) It is accused of taking on too many educational and social problems by some.
  . . . of avoiding the most difficult educational and social problems by others.
(4) It is accused of responding to every educational fad by some.
  . . . of being slow to change by others.
(5) It is accused of acting on a piecemeal basis by some.
  . . . of attempting change that is too comprehensive by others.
(6) The federal government is accused of exercising too much control by some.
  . . . of exercising too little control by others.

(Editor's Note: The following article is based upon remarks made by Mr. Wise at the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Advisory Council on Education in September, 1980)

* Arthur E. Wise, now with the RAND Corporation, has written widely on educational issues. He was one of the principal drafters of the provisions in the Department of Education Organization Act (Public Law 96-88) establishing the Intergovernmental Advisory Council on Education.

Inherent bind: The more the federal government does and the more effectively it does it, the more it is subject to the charge that the federal government is controlling education.

Clearly, there are different expectations held out for the federal role by different groups. Sometimes groups do not behave consistently. Some of the strongest opponents of an expanded federal role will use federal law to acheive what they perceive to be important objectives. Some of the strongest advocates of federal action will strenuously object to federal regulations which circumscribe their actions.

The Context of Intergovernmental Relations

Under the federal Constitution education is a function not delegated to the federal government. It is the responsibility of states, localities, and private institutions. From time-to-time, however the Congress has deemed it in the national interest to enact legislation concerning education. At times the purpose has been to help solve important national problems as in the creation of science education and career education programs, at times to ensure equality of educational opportunity for every American regardless of race, sex, age, ethnic heritage, economic disadvantage or handicapping condition, and at times to help improve the quality of American education by investing in research and development. In support of the general welfare, the federal government has the clear mandate to solve national problems, to increase equality of opportunity and to improve the education of its citizenry.

In recent years, the federal role in education has expanded dramatically. In 1960, the Office of Education administered only twenty programs with appropriations of $465 million. Today the Education Department administers 150 programs with appropriations of about $15 billion. Changes on this order of magnitude signal an important development—one with major intergovernmental implications.

Some look at the remarkable accomplishments of the federal government. New curricula exist which would not otherwise exist. Additional funds and special programs serve the needs of the poor and the educationally disadvantaged. Great progress has been made in the teaching of beginning reading skills. Many attend college who would otherwise not. These are accomplishments of which the Nation can justly be proud.

Others look at the growth of the federal role and observe the problems it has brought. Schools and colleges—public and private—are subject to numerous regulations. The large number of categorical programs has meant multiple, duplicatory and even conflicting regulations. The need to ensure conformity to the regulations has generated a huge demand for paperwork. Many of the requirements and much of the paperwork are seen as not contributing to—or even detracting from—the educational process.

Still others view the growth of the federal role with genuine alarm. Education is a state and local responsibility. Local control of public schools and autonomy for private educational institutions are cherished traditions in American life. With these traditions come diversity, choice and freedom—goals which Americans prize. The fear is that the federal government may centralize control, limit autonomy, and reduce diversity, choice and freedom.

Still others believe that the federal government has not gone far enough in pursuing the objectives it has undertaken. There is not yet full equality of educational opportunity for all. There are other pressing national needs which the federal government should meet. There is always more research which needs to be done.

In short, there is a great diversity of views with respect to the federal role in education. Some believe that the federal government should relate primarily to elected state officials, others that it should relate primarily to state education officials and still others that it should relate directly to educational institutions or individuals.

It is important that there be provided a forum to confront these differing perceptions. That forum is the Intergovernmental Advisory Council on Education.

Motivations for the Council

(1) One of the major motivations for the creation of the Education Department was improved management. There was the realization that such an objective would not be fully achieved simply by redesigning the organization chart. Some management problems have their roots in intergovernmental relationships.

(2) Some advocates and some opponents of the Education Department hoped for deregulation, program consolidation, and administrative simplification. There was the belief that no action on these should be taken without careful study.

(3) There was the belief that no mechanism or organization was

adequately attending to the health of the intergovernmental system for managing education and to issues of federalism in education.

(4) There was the need for a mechanism to help allay fears that the Education Department would increase federal control and/or become a "ministry of education."

Legal Definitions of the Federal Role in Education

There are several legal sources to determine the federal role in education.

(1.) *The Constitution: coniains prescriptions which help to define the federal role in education.*

  (a) Article I, Section 8. "The Congress shall have power to . . . provide for the . . . general welfare of the United States . . ."

  (b) Fifth amendment."No person shall . . . be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law . . ."

(2.) *The Constitution provides the basis for a deductive approach to defining the federal role. Existing federal legislation provides the basis for an inductive approach. The multiplicity of federal education laws may be categorized by a variety of schema.* For example, federal purposes have been listed as:

  (a) To assure equality of educational opportunity.

  (b) To encourage high educational standards.

  (c) To strengthen relationships among education, training, and work.

  (d) To encourage the growth of lifelong learning opportunities.

  (e) To meet a variety of recognized national needs.

  (f) To exercise leadership in the support of research in education.*

  From a categorization such as this, one can see that the federal role has encompassed a very broad set of purposes.

(3.) *Education Department Legislation.*** *This legislation, while intended to define the purposes of the Education Department, nonetheless reveals a sense of the federal role.*

Sec. 102. The Congress declares that the establishment of a Department of Education is in the public interest, will promote the general welfare of the United States, will help ensure that education issues receive proper treatment at the federal level, and will enable the federal government to coordinate its education activities more effectively. Therefore, the purposes of this Act are—

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* Federal Interagency Committee on Education, *Toward A Comprehensive Federal Education Policy*. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, April 1978.

**Public Law 96-88.

(1) to strengthen the federal commitment to ensuring access to equal educational opportunity for every individual;
(2) to supplement and complement the efforts of states, the local school systems and other instrumentalities of the states, the private sector, public and private educational institutions, public and private non-profit educational research institutions, community-based organizations, parents and students to improve the quality of education;
(3) to encourage the increased involvement of the public, parents, and students in federal education programs;
(4) to promote improvements in the quality and usefulness of education through federally supported research, evaluation, and sharing of information;
(5) to improve the coordination of federal education programs;
(6) to improve the management and efficiency of federal education activities, especially with respect to the process, procedures, and administrative structures for the dispersal of federal funds, as well as the reduction of unnecessary and duplicative burdens and constraints, including unnecessary paperwork, on the recipients of federal funds; and
(7) to increase the accountability of federal education programs to the President, the Congress, and the public."

(4.) *Conclusion. The federal role in education is cumulatively the education laws which have been enacted.*

Legal Definitions of What the Federal Role in Education Is Not

There are several legal sources to determine what the federal role in education is not.

(1) *The Constitution: contains certain proscriptions which potentially limit the federal role.*

(a) Tenth Amendment. "The powers not delegated to the

United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people."

(b) First Amendment. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the full exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press . . ."

(2) *Education Department Legislation. The Education Department legislation contains an apparently strong prohibition against federal action (Section 103).*

"(a) It is the intention of the Congress in the establishment of the Department to protect the rights of state and local governments and public and private educational institutions in the areas of educational policies and administration of programs and to strengthen and improve the control of such governments and institutions over their own educational programs and policies. The establishment of the Department of Education shall not increase the authority of the federal government over education or diminish the responsibility for education which is reserved to the states and the local school systems and other instrumentalities of the states.

(b) No provision of a program administered by the Secretary or by any other officers of the Department shall be construed to authorize the Secretary or any such officer to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any educational institution, school, or school system, over any accrediting agency or association, or over the selection or content of library resources, textbooks, or other instructional materials by any educational institution or school system, except to the extent authorized by law."

Still, language similar to this provision has been around since at least 1965—during the recent expansion of federal activity.

Other ways of Defining the Federal Role

The preceding discussion of legal approaches ought to reveal that the federal government has broad latitude with respect to education. Clearly, the federal government can do all that it is now doing. It can do more; it can do less.

What principles can be used to define the federal role?

Cost

What percentage of the federal budget should education be?

What percentage of educational expenditures should the federal government bear?

Should the federal objective be simply to share the costs of education? (Superior taxing capacity)

Should the federal government, by its policies, be seeking to increase aggregate expenditures on education?

Or should the federal government, by its policies, be seeking to contain educational expenditures?

What percentage of GNP should the Nation spend on education?

Should the federal objective be simply to increase expenditures on specific programs or populations?

Issues of cost can be limiting principles.

Political/Philosophical

Does one as a matter of principle favor national, state or local government? In other words, does one believe in the overriding importance of national purpose, states rights, or local control of education? Always? Usually? Sometimes? Rarely?

What are one's views of the efficacy of government intervention in the schools to solve social problems?

Does one favor setting uniform standards as a means of quality improvement as in elementary and secondary legislation? Or does one believe in competition as a means of quality improvement as in college student aid?

Does one favor the efficiency traditionally associated with centralization or the diversity of decentralization?

Does one favor keeping education out of politics or does one favor increasing the role of general government officials in the governance of education?

Does one wish to enhance professional, bureaucratic or parental control over education?

These questions are answered—but seldom openly—with every piece of education legislation.

Practical/Technical

What can the federal government do well?

What can it do better than other levels of government?

What educational purposes will not be served without federal intervention?

What can the federal government not do well? More specifically, which of its actions do not achieve their intended purposes? Which of its actions have unintended and disfunctional consequences?

There is today broad consensus on the goals of most federal education legislation. But there are practical and technical limits to our ability to achieve some of those goals. You may use pragmatic criteria to define limits for the federal role. In particular, you will want to assess the mechanisms by which the federal government affects local behavior: general support, categorical support, regulation, incentive, disincentive, research, leadership, and through empowering students and parents.

What the Council Should Be/Do

The Council should generally try to base its recommendations upon studies, research, and analysis.

The Council should focus its attention principally upon the long-term health of the intergovernmental system for managing education. while its focus is necessarily upon the effects of federal action or inaction, it may find that it needs to make recommendations concerning state and local actions.

What the Council Should Not Be/Do

The Council should resist the temptation to be a national school board, or focus on structural rather than substantive issues.

The Council should resist the temptation to become involved in the administration of the Department, in the day-to-day operations of the Department or in the annual budget process.

The Council should resist the temptation to act as a buffer between the Secretary and the President or between the Administration and the Congress.

The Council should weigh carefully efforts to enhance its authority over the regulatory process.

Conclusion

The structure for governing America's schools and colleges—public and private—is undergoing unprecedented change.

The quantity of federal activity has increased dramatically between 1960 and 1980.

In the same period, state-level activity affecting schools and colleges has begun to increase, partially in response to federal activity.

Court action has fueled some federal and state activity; in turn, court action has been fueled by federal and state activity.

In response to such traditions as federalism, local control of the schools, institutional autonomy in post-secondary and private education, the separation of education from politics, teacher professionalism, and collegial governance have begun to disappear.

The result is dramatic and unexamined change in the ways by which we make educational decisions. Authority and responsibility for educational decisions are diffused and confused.

There is no body except this body with the mandate and hopefully the resources to help sort out federal, state, and local roles.

A STATEHOUSE VIEW ON THE FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION

Robert C. Andringa*

After one year in Governor Al Quie's office, the need for a substantial recasting of our local-state-federal partnership in education seems more urgent. My statehouse experience follows eight exciting years on the staff of the education and Labor Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. So I have viewed the question of the appropriate federal role from both sides of the fence.

While I am about to outline the virtues of strengthening the state and local elements of the partnership equation, it is important to look first at how the whole federal apparatus appears to many of us folks far from Washington.

The nation appears now to lack vision—a direction people can understand and support. That calls fór *federal* leadership. We desperately need an energy program. In large part, *that* has to be shaped at the federal level. We are concerned about inflation, defense policy, foreign relations. *Those* are federal concerns. We in the states need and want a federal government that has time to plan, to weigh alternatives, to give direction for the 1980's.

But instead we see fragmented congressional subcommittees immersed in the mechanics of small programs while important policy issues are neglected by the Congress. We see proliferating agencies and overlapping programs that seemingly can not be managed effectively. We see few "put it all together" leaders—only a myriad of specialists.

These disturbing trends were easily recognized during the 1970s. Yet, there appears to be no way to initiate fundamental reforms in how national policy gets put together. Are we expecting too much of the federal decision-making process?

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By comparison, life seems more manageable at the state level. One can more easily grasp the important variables to policy decisions. People are not smarter here, but somehow problems—especially those with human components—are still within the scope of human decision-making.

Why is this so? Here are some observations which hopefully will convince people that a modified federal role in education is necessary.

Time.

While state legislators and executive officers are busy, they can and do find time to discuss important issues, even on a couple of days notice. It was much more difficult to even get the key players together in the impossible pace of Washington.

Timeliness.

A different aspect of the time problem, the state decision-making machinery can be more sensitive to the mood of the people, local economic factors, court rulings, and the myriad other variables that often determine whether new policy works or falls by the wayside.

Responsiveness.

You can't get away with unresponsiveness very long at the local or state level. People see one another too often. Local media have time and space to cover most important issues. Part-time legislators are home so often it is impossible to claim ignorance of how people are thinking about education.

Early Feedback.

Too often, Washington decision-makers sign-off on a "new federal priority in education" and then wait several years before adequate data are available for evaluation. Correcting adjustments in laws or regulations come too late. Because the territory is smaller, the communications networks are more convenient, and the decision-makers are more readily accessible, feedback at the state level is better.

Teacher and Parental Involvement.

As a Hill staffer, I often regretted that most of our input came from Washington lobbyists or institutional administrators from out of town on expense accounts. Leaders in the states have more communication with students, faculty, and parents. That is healthy for decision-makers and, in turn, for education.

Institutional Coordination.

Especially during periods of enrollment decline and the need to accommodate students with special needs, inter-institutional planning and cooperation are necessary. Again, we can point to many examples of this in Minnesota because our legislature and executive understood the needs and could respond in a sensitive and progressive manner.

Competent People Involved.

One of the major changes in state government during the 1970's was the addition of scores of bright, well-educated legislative staffers. And the availability of highly credentialed education planners and administrators at the local and state levels is a constantly improving variable. My federal friends and I sometimes looked down on state education leadership as less competent. I now regret that attitude.

The Money.

If states wanted to, they could adjust to reductions in federal aid for education. The "if" is a big one and is the reason so few educators do anything but ask for more federal aid. The interesting point, however, is that educational entrepeneurs are looking for money at *every* level. Those that know how to "work the feds" tend to fly to Washington. Besides, it is more fun going to the nation's capital than the statehouse!

The Human Equation.

Education does not reach its potential good in the lives of people unless the invisible variables are at work. Any distant government could provide the tangibles: buildings, books, films, boiler rooms and buses. What government can *not* do is buy or mandate the intangibles: excitement, creativity, love for kids, and the motivation to think, work hard, listen to students and care. These come from within a person. And they work best when the partner called government is close by, sensitive, realistic, responsive. Educators are no different from others. They want a voice in their government. The states have a fighting chance to be that kind of government.

Local Control.

Ultimately, schools must be the creative product of local action.

School districts and public colleges derive their authority from the states which, under our constitution, were left with the responsibility for education. States must be careful not to argue less federal control so they can increase their own control. Ultimately, what the federal and state governments do must produce the desired results—tangible and intangible—at the local level. If we doubt the ability of local groups to produce quality education, we need only to look at hundreds of private schools which, with local boards and not much help from government at any level, have achieved substantial success. Not all private schools have that reputation, but enough do to make the point.

Any analysis of this length is simplified. And I have neglected to point out some shortcomings of state government in education. Nevertheless, I think all of us must attempt to focus on the essence of our current education enterprise in America and better articulate the overall goals and direction for government at each level.

So what is the federal role? To allow Congress and the executive branch to focus on those major issues states can not resolve, and to bring educational decision-making closer to the people, I propose a more limited federal role with the following major elements:

- Education research that requires large finances, covers long time periods, and whose results have applicability to many.
- Enforcement of rules protecting against discrimination and ensuring equal protection of basic rights, whenever a state demonstrates an inability to do as good a job.
- Financing to support federal mandates related to education for the handicapped, health and safety rules, etc.
- Support for graduate education and basic research that is in the national interest, at a more limited number of institutions.
- Moderate amounts of short-term incentive money for innovation and experimentation, with broad constraints.
- Sufficient resources to complement state and institutional efforts to provide access for any student who has the ability and motivation, but lacks the money, to pursue postsecondary education.

There it is. A prescription for reducing by at least 50% the number and variety of hundreds of separate federal programs in education. With appropriate help, the states would pick up the slack and produce just as good a track record as we now have in providing quality education in America. Maybe even better. The decade of the eighties is the time to try.

In one sense, there are few political documents as stale as last year's party platforms. Intensely disputed during the campaign, platform positions are duly interred (usually without ceremony) immediately thereafter. They are seldom mourned in the passing.

Nonetheless, it sometimes happens that party platforms on given issues serve as a convenient snapshot of larger ideological and political disputes. The 1980 Democratic and Republican party planks on education offer a case in point.

1980 POLITICAL PLATFORMS

THE REPUBLICAN EDUCATION PLATFORM

Next to religious training and the home, education is the most important means by which families hand down to each new generation their ideals and beliefs. It is a pillar of a free society. But today, parents are losing control of their children's schooling. The Democratic Congress and its counterparts in many states have launched one fad after another, building huge new bureaucracies to misspend our taxes. The result has been a shocking drop in student performance, lack of basics in the classroom, forced busing, teacher strikes, manipulative and sometimes amoral indoctrination.

The Republican Party is determined to restore common sense and quality to education for the sake of all students, especially those for whom learning is the highway to equal opportunity. Because federal assistance should help local school districts, not tie them up in red tape, we will strive to replace the crazyquilt of wasteful programs with a system of block grants that will restore decisionmaking to local officials responsible to voters and parents. We recognize the need to preserve, within the structure of block grants, special educational opportunities for the handicapped, the disadvantaged, and other needy students attending public and private nonprofit elementary and secondary schools.

We hail the teachers of America. Their dedication to our children is often taken for ganted, and they are frequently underpaid for long hours and selfless service, especially in comparison with other public employees.

We understand and sympathize with the plight of America's public school teachers, who so frequently find their time and attention diverted from their teaching responsibilities to the task of complying with federal reporting requirements. America has a great stake in maintaining standards of high quality in public education. The

Republican Party recognizes that the achievement of those standards is possible only to the extent that teachers are allowed the time and freedom to teach. To that end, the Republican Party supports deregulation by the federal government of public education, and encourages the elimination of the federal Department of Education.

We further sympathize with the right of qualified teachers to be employed by any school district wishing to hire them, without the necessity of their becoming enrolled with any bargaining agency or group. We oppose any federal action, including any action on the part of the Department of Education, to establish "agency shops" in public schools.

We support Republican initiatives in the Congress to restore the right of individuals to participate in voluntary, non-denominational prayer in schools and other public facilities.

Our goal is quality education for all of America's children, with a special commitment to those who must overcome handicap, deprivation, or discrimination. That is why we condemn the forced busing of school children to achieve arbitrary racial quotas. Busing has been a prescription for disaster, blighting whole communities across the land with its divisive impact. It has failed to improve the quality of education, while diverting funds from programs that could make the difference between success and failure for the poor, the disabled, and minority children.

We must halt forced busing and get on with the education of all our children, focusing on the real causes of their problems, especially lack of economic opportunity.

Federal education policy must be based on the primacy of parental rights and responsibility. Toward that end, we reaffirm our support for a system of educational assistance based on tax credits that will in part compensate parents for their financial sacrifices in paying tuition at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary level. This is a matter of fairness, especially for low-income families, most of whom would be free for the first time to choose for their children those schools which best correspond to their own cultural and moral values. In this way, the schools will be strengthened by the families' involvement, and the families' strengths will be reinforced by supportive cultural institutions.

We are dismayed that the Carter Administration cruelly reneged on promises made during the 1976 campaign. Wielding the threat of his veto, Mr. Carter led the fight against Republican attempts to make tuition tax credits a reality.

Next year, a Republican White House will assist, not sabotage. Congressional efforts to enact tuition tax relief into law.

We will halt the unconstitutional regulatory vendetta launched by Mr. Carter's IRS Commissioner against independent schools.

We will hold the federal bureaucracy accountable for its harassment of colleges and universities and will clear away the tangle of regulation that has unconscionably driven up their expenses and tuitions. We will respect the rights of state and local authorities in the management of their school systems.

The commitment of the American people to provide educational opportunities for all has resulted in a tremendous expansion of schools at all levels. And the more we reduce the federal proportion of taxation, the more resources will be left to sustain and develop state and local institutions.

THE DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION PLATFORM

Perhaps the single most important factor in spurring productivity in our society is a skilled work force. We must begin to think of federal expenditures as capital investments, favoring those which are productive and which reduce future costs. In this context, education must be one of our highest priorities. Education is also the indispensable prerequisite for effective democracy. As Daniel Webster said, "On the diffusion of education among people rests the preservation and perpetuation of free institutions."

The Democratic Party is strongly committed to education as the best hope for America's future. We applaud the leadership taken by a Democratic President and a Democratic Congress in strengthening federal programs for education.

In the past four years:

- Federal aid to education has increased by 73%—the greatest income increase in such a short period in our history;
- Strong financial and administrative support has been provided for programs that enhance educational opportunities for women, minorities, American Indians and other native Americans, the handicapped, and students with limited English-speaking ability and other special needs:

- The Middle Income Student Assistance Act was adopted, expanding eligibility for need-based student financial aid to approximately one-third of the students enrolled in post-secondary education;
- A number of legislative, regulatory, and other administrative actions were taken to enhance benefits received by private school children from federal education programs; and
- A new Department of Education was created to give education a stronger, more direct voice at the federal level, while at the same time reserving control over educational policymaking and operations to states, localities, and public and private institutions.

Over the next four years, we pledge to continue our strong commitment to education. We will continue to support the Department of Education and assist in its all-important educational enterprise that involves three out of ten Americans.

In this regard, we endorse the language of the legislation which emphasized the intent of Congress "to protect the rights of state and local governments and public and private institutions in the areas of educational policies and administration of programs. . ."

It is now a decade and a half since the passage—by a Democratic Congress at the behest of a Democratic Administration—of the landmark Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. At the time, there were sound and compelling reasons to undergird all federal aid to education with specific purposes. The specific purposes remain compelling and the specific programs addressed to them must be maintained.

Federal aid to education plays a significant role in guaranteeing that jurisdictions of differing financial capacity can spend equal amounts on schooling. We favor a steady increase in federal support with an emphasis on reducing inter- and intra-state disparities in ability to support quality education. The federal government and the states should be encouraged to equalize or take over educational expenses, relieving the overburdened property taxpayer.

The Democratic Party renews its commitment to eliminating discrimination in education because of sex and demands full and expeditious enforcement of Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments.

The Democratic Party strongly urges that the federal government be sensitive to mandating state and local programs without adequate provision for funding. Such mandates force the state and/or local governments to increase taxes to fund such required programs.

Equal educational opportunity is at the heart of the Democratic program for education. Equality of opportunity must sometimes translate to compensatory efforts. For the disadvantaged, the handicapped, those with limited English language skills, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and other minorities, compensatory programs require concentrated federal spending.

The Democratic Administration and Congress have supported a comprehensive program of compensatory education and have expanded it to include secondary education. We will continue to target categorical assistance to low-income and low- achieving students.

We reaffirm our strong support for Title I concentration grants for remedial instruction for low income students. The Democratic Party pledges to achieve full funding of concentration grants under Title I and to expand the Headstart and Follow Through programs.

The Democratic Party will continue to advocate quality education in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and in tribally contracted schools to meet American Indian educational needs. The Democratic Party opposes the closing of schools serving American Indians and Alaska Natives without consultation with the tribes involved.

The Democratic Party recognizes the need to maintain quality education for children in school districts affected by federal activities and installations. We therefore will continue to be sensitive to the financial problems of these school districts.

School desegregation is an important tool in the effort to give all children equal educational opportunity. The Democratic Party continues to support programs aimed at achieving communities integrated both in terms of race and economic class through constitutional means. We encourage redrawing of attendance lines, pairing of schools, utilizing the "magnet school concept" as much as possible, and enforcing fair housing standards. Mandatory transportation of students beyond their neighborhoods for the purpose of desegregation remains a judicial tool of last resort.

We call for strict compliance with civil rights requirements in hiring and promotion in school systems.

We support an effective bilingual program to reach all limited English-proficiency people who need such assistance.

The Democratic Party supports efforts to broaden students' knowledge and appreciation of other cultures, languages and countries.

We also support vocational and technical education through increased support for teacher training, personnel development, and upgrading and modernizing equipment and facilities to provide the skill and technical training to meet the workforce needs for business, industry, and government services. Increased emphasis on basic skills is essential to the success of vocational and technical training. Vocational and technical education is a viable tool for establishing people in their own business through entrepreneurship programs. Vocational and technical education contributes to the economic development and productivity of our nation by offering every person an opportunity to develop a marketable skill.

The Party reaffirms its support of public school education and would not support any program or legislation that would create or promote economic, sociological or racial segregation. Our primary purpose in assisting elementary and secondary education must be to assure a quality public school system for all students.

Private schools, particularly parochial schools, are also an important part of our diverse educational system. The Party accepts its commitment to the support of a constitutionally acceptable method of providing tax aid for the education of all pupils in schools which do not racially discriminate, and excluding so-called segregation academies. Specifically, the Party will continue to advocate constitutionally permissible federal education legislation which provides for the equitable participation in federal programs of all low- and moderate-income pupils.

The Democratic Party reaffirms its commitment to the concept and promise that every handicapped child should have a full and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. To assure the best placement and program for handicapped students, we support maximum involvement of the regular classroom teacher in placement planning for handicapped students with assurance of barrier-free access. We further support increasing the federal share of the costs of education for the handicapped.

We applaud the actions taken by the government in strengthening federal programs for higher education. The nation must continue to ensure that our colleges and universities can provide quality higher education in the coming period of declining enrollment and rising operating costs.

We are especially interested in extending postsecondary opportunities to students from low- and middle-income families, older students, and minorities. We believe that no able student should be denied a college education for reason of cost.

The Democratic Party is committed to a federal scholarship program adequate to meet the needs of all the underprivileged who could benefit from a college education. When those who are qualified for postsecondary education cannot afford to enter college, the nation ignores talent we cannot afford to lose. Basic Education Opportunity Grants, which offer both access to a college education and the choice of a college, must continue to be strengthened and should be funded at full payment schedule.

Likewise, campus-based programs of aid must be supported. With a coordinated and reliable system of grants, loans and work study, we can relieve the crisis in costs that could close all but the affluent colleges and universities.

Since entry to institutions of higher learning is dependent upon a student's score on a standardized test, we support testing legislation which will assure that students will receive sufficient information relative to their performance on the test to determine their strengths and weaknesses on the tests.

Our institutions of higher education deserve both public and private backing. The Party supports the continuation of tax deductions for charitable gifts, recognizing that such gifts represent the margin of excellence in higher education and foster scholarly independence within our institutions of higher learning.

The Democratic Party commits itself to the strengthening of graduate education and the support of basic and applied research. Graduate education, scholarship and research are of immense importance to the nation's economic and cultural development. Universities conduct most of the nation's basic research. Their graduate and research programs are the training grounds for the research personnel and professionals who discover knowledge and translate that knowledge into action.

The federal role is critical to the quality of these endeavors. We reaffirm the federal responsibility for stable support of knowledge production and development of highly trained personnel in all areas of fundamental scientific and intellectual knowledge to meet social needs.

High priority should be assigned to strengthening the national structure for graduate education, scholarship and research and ensuring that the most talented students, especially women and minorities, can gain access to these programs.

Historically Black colleges and universities have played a pivotal role in educating minority students. The Democratic Party affirms its commitment to ensuring the financial viability and independence of these worthy institutions and supports expanded funding for Black institutions. The Democratic Party pledges to work vigorously for significant increases in programs which have traditionally provided funding for historically Black colleges and universities. Particular attention should be given to substantially increasing the share of funding Black colleges receive. We will substantially increase the level of participation of Black colleges in all federal programs for which they are eligible. In addition, we urge the establishment of an office within the Office of the Secretary of Education to ensure full executive implementation of the President's Black college directive. Similarly, colleges serving Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Asian/Pacific Islander students should receive equal consideration in federal policies affecting their survival.

Finally, educational quality should be strengthened through adequate support for libraries, federal leadership in educational research and development, and improved teacher training.

The Democratic Party further urges the federal government to take into account the geographical barriers to access to educational and library materials which particularly affect the noncontiguous territories of the United States. A study should be conducted to review the possibility of sending airmail, at surface mail rates, said materials to and from the mainland U.S. and the noncontiguous territories of the U.S.

The Party believes that improved teacher inservice training, building upon the successful "Teacher Center Model" implemented under this Administration, could contribute substantially to educational quality. We support the establishment of federally funded teacher centers in every state and will work toward a steady increase in the number of teachers served. Teacher centers should address such issues as bilingual, multicultural, non-racist, and nonsexist curricula.

The Party continues to support adult education and training to upgrade basic skills.

We propose federally financed family-centered developmental and educational child care programs available to all who need and desire them.

We support efforts to provide for the basic nutritional needs of students. We support the availability of nutritious school breakfast, milk and lunch programs. Students who are hungry or malnourished can experience serious learning difficulties. The Democratic Party affirms its commitment to restore fair eligibility requirements for this program and to set fees at a level which does not unfairly deny students the ability to participate.

The Democratic Party recognizes the importance of family and community involvement in public schools, and the impact their involvement can have on the quality of a child's educational environment. We support initiatives that will encourage parents and all members of the community to take an active interest in the educational future of our children.

Charles Cooke, the author of the next selection and the official in charge of education legislation during the Nixon-Ford years, shares many of the concerns felt by Bernstein and Merenda. As Cooke points out, much of the criticism of current federal programs is part of a more general desire to return to simpler times and easier problems; but the government, he argues, has exacerbated its problems by relying on a rigid, compliance-oriented approach to running its programs.

As a partial solution to the difficulties posed by this compartmentalization of federal money, Cooke argues for more emphasis on outcomes—through a whole-school approach that allows flexibility within given school sites—rather than on inputs and fiscal controls.

FEDERAL EDUCATION STRATEGY DURING THE 1980's

Charles Cooke*

As we begin the third century of our experience, it appears that we, as a nation, have lost sight of the fact that we are also beginning the third century of our "noble experiment" of nationhood. As our experiences have accumulated, they have weighed down that sense of noble experiment that enthralled the founders of this nation. Nowhere has this become more evident than in the public school system of our country.

Our public schools are near to achieving a goal which no other nation in the world has attempted—the free public education of all the children of the nation. And this free public education is not only free in the economic sense, but also free from ideological indoctrination—either political, religious, or both.

By the decade of the 1970's, after two centuries of struggle and effort, our experiment of free public education for all had attained many of its goals, as illustrated by the facts that:

- about 90 percent of school age children attend public schools.
- about 90 percent of high school age students attend public high schools.
- slightly more than 1 percent of the American people were illiterate, whereas in 1900 this figure was about 11 percent.
- the United States is ranked number one among all countries in the percentage of 15–18 year olds enrolled in school.
- high school graduation rates were more than 80 percent, having risen from below 50 percent in 1950, and the United States had 75 percent of the world's 12th grade students.

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- 46 percent of our high school graduates attend college.

Earlier in the 1960's, as our public school system began to see that many of the overall goals of free public education were near achievement, the focus of our education discussions and strategies shifted from the education needs of the many to the unique educational needs of the few—the poor, the limited and non-English speaking, and the handicapped. Education for the majority had largely been accomplished; education for the minority had not.

In support of these new directions, the federal government (and a few states) led the way, developing categorical programs to target resources upon the populations in need. Compensatory education, bilingual education, education for all the handicapped and the expansion of vocational education, were major categorical educational programs designed to provide assistance to the population in need, and to provide incentives to states and local educational agencies to develop their own programs to meet these unique educational needs.

In many ways, up to the 1960's, the public school systems of this country, along with most other programs providing social services, were paced to the desires, mores and social values of the majority. The minority (those who had difficulty in assimilating the majority viewpoints) were essentially excluded from the rewards of the system and labeled variously as stupid, lazy, retarded, recalcitrant, trouble makers, indifferent, and/or cheaters. A prevailing attitude was that if you couldn't learn it was your fault, not the schools' fault.

The change in the educational emphasis of the 1960's was to question that prevailing attitude and try to alter the perspective to one where the question became: "Why can't schools educate this child?" In the 1970's that change is still in dispute, and the challenge for education in the 1980's will be whether or not the public at large will support a public school system where the focus is upon the unique educational needs of each child regardless of race, color, national origin, creed or handicapping condition.

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The enactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 set in motion a train of events with regard to federal educational programs and how they would be implemented—a train which today threatens to stall out before it reaches the summit.

From the beginning, the federal government has had to attempt to define and refine what the exact nature of the federal role in education should be. Provision of educational services has historically been the province of state and local governments, and the federal government's role in the educational process has been neither self-evident nor easily definable.

The first federal efforts within the realm of education came into being to answer perceived national needs and priorities—mostly to develop an increased number of properly trained personnel and to provide impetus to research efforts. Within this framework, the federal government provided assistance to colleges in the Morrill Act of 1862 and to vocational education in the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917.

Next, federal attention was focused on the recognition that the federal government should bear some fiscal responsibility for educational costs which were influenced as the result of federal activities. This recognition caused, in the 1950's, the enactment of Public Laws 81-874 and 815, school assistance to federally affected areas (generally known as Impact Aid) which provided federal fiscal assistance to school districts impacted by federally owned areas (thereby non-taxable by state or local governments) and/or federal employees (thereby, in some instances, non-taxable by state or local governments).

Also in the Fifties came an enactment of a federal education law designed to answer a newly perceived national need and priority—the National Defense Education Act—which recognized that the nation needed more and better trained engineers and scientists as well as linguists and foreign area specialists.

In the decade of the Sixties, as previously noted, the federal government began to shift its focus to another national concern—that of ensuring equal educational opportunity to all. This concern had always been a part of the overall education concerns and, in fact, the original development of vocational education in the late 19th century in large measure had been born out of the concern for equal educational opportunities for all students, not just those students pursuing academic and professional careers.

This concern became more paramount in the Sixties with the initial focus being the necessity to provide additional federal assistance to the children of poor families in order that such children could break out of the cycle of poverty and become independent rather than dependent citizens. From this initial focus, federal education priorities have been extended to include assistance to most of the historically under-assisted populations: economically disadvantaged, special education, limited and non-English speaking, American Indian, and other minority groups. The main goal of all these programs has been to assist these students in obtaining equal access to the entire school programs offered through the elementary, secondary, vocational and post-secondary systems.

Thus, by the 1970's federal education programs were aimed at meeting a variety of perceived national needs:

- Providing assistance to develop skills generally in need nationally.
- Improving the quality of educational services through support of research, information, and dissemination.
- Supporting the development of needed educational institutions.
- Providing fiscal assistance to states and local agencies and to individuals to obtain equal educational opportunity for the economically disadvantaged, handicapped, limited and non-English speaking, and minority populations.
- Providing fiscal assistance to state and local agencies to help overcome fiscal burdens created by uneven distribution of the population in need.*

Also, by the same time, the federal budget for education had increased enormously.

With this increased federal role, both in terms of scope and dollars, came also increasing concerns about the proper expenditure of the federal dollars. From 1965 onward, Congress became increasingly concerned over whether the appropriated dollars were being spent upon the purposes for which they were appropriated.

This Congressional concern was paralleled by the increasing knowledge and concern among the historically underserved populations to ensure that the services now offered them by the federal government were indeed being provided to them, and that equal educational opportunity become not just a promise, but a reality. These concerns helped to create the various civil rights statutes and structures which were designed to ensure the right of all individuals to an equal educational opportunity, and to reemphasize the responsibility of all institutions, federal, state and local, public and, in some areas, private, to provide such opportunity.

Overall, the increased federal role in education, both in the provision of educational assistance and the protection of the individual, was occurring in a *milieu* of increased complexity of life. In all aspects of life, human action, individually, nationally and worldwide, has become more interdependent, more complicated and more confusing than it had been in the "good old days." Nostalgia for a return to those "good old days" when life was "simpler" grew as the complexities and confusion of "modern" life increased.

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* The limited and non-English speaking populations, for instance, are concentrated in four states—California, New York, Texas and Florida.

The combination of increased Congressional concern over how the money was spent, public desire for a return to the "simple life," increased awareness of and demand for equal educational opportunity, and increasing fiscal constraints led us, in the late 1970's, toward greater confrontation among ourselves on a host of educational issues: the goal of equal educational opportunity; federal, state and local control over education; school finance; desegregation; and the relevance and effectiveness of public education and/or private education.

The confrontation, while perhaps inevitable given the trends of society, has been exacerbated by the track the federal government has chosen to take with regard to carrrying out the federal priorities and ensuring the protection of individual rights. In the first case, again perhaps inevitably, the federal structure has moved forth with an assumption that the primary way to ensure federal priorities and protections are met is to *make* states, districts and schools carry them out. The corollary of this assumption was that left to their own devices schools and local educational agencies would not move to meet perceived national needs.

There can be little doubt that in the beginning such an assumption was correct in many areas. A classic example is the history of Title I of Elementary and Secondary Education. The purpose of this legislation was to provide additional fiscal assistance to schools and school districts heavily impacted with large concentrations of children of low income families. The rationale of such a program was that provision of additional instruction to such children would allow them a greater chance of success within the school system to obtain those skills necessary for a productive life. The educational and social benefits of such an outcome were manifest.

Shortly after implementation of this new law, it was found that in some areas of the country, states and local educational agencies were using these additional funds to replace state and local funds which had previously been used to provide services to the children now eligible to receive Title I funded assistance.

This practice, and others which served to thwart the federal purpose and intent, have generated over time a panoply of statutory provisions to close the "loopholes." The "supplement, not supplant," maintenance of effort, excess cost and comparability provisions of Title I were all enacted to bring an end to various state and local practices which were perceived as circumventing the federal intent.

It is important to note that each of these provisions were rational and logical as reactions to proven misconduct and as standards for proper program operation. At the time, each of them represented a necessary and important step in ensuring federal intent was implemented.

Over the same time frame, however, other important statutes were enacted and began to be implemented—Titles IV, VI, and IX of the Civil Rights Act, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. Additionally, important court decisions had an impact upon the delivery of educational services—the *Brown* decision on desegregation and the *Lau vs. Nichols* decision regarding equal opportunity for children with limited and non-English speaking abilities.

Additionally, in California the *Serrano* decision directed the state to develop funding allocation processes which would eliminate (to a large extent) the disparities among local educational agencies with regard to wealth-related per pupil expenditures. While not applicable to the entire nation, the *Serrano* decision nonetheless influenced both other states and federal educational strategies and priorities.

Thus, by the early 1970's, a legal framework for ensuring equal educational opportunity had been established. During the latter half of the Seventies, this framework began to be filled in with regulations, guidelines, program directives and rules. The world of education was more and more filled with a web of requirements sometimes complementary, sometimes conflicting, most often confusing and, in all cases, difficult to cross without becoming entangled in at least one line, if not more.

A good example of the crisscrossing interlocking lines of this web is the requirements which must be met by states and school districts with regard to delivery of compensatory education services, carrying out court-ordered desegregation, meeting the needs of limited and non-English speaking students, and providing special educational services to handicapped children.

A school district may receive different Federal funds to provide compensatory education, to assist in desegregation activities, to provide multi-lingual services to limited and non-English speaking students, and to provide special educational services to handicapped children.

In several states the same school district may receive state funds for some of the same purposes and targeted upon the same population. In California, for instance, the state provided funds for compensatory education programs, bilingual programs and special education programs, thus reinforcing federal efforts in each of these areas.

In each program federal funds must remain separately identifiable so that federal auditors can ensure that the funds are being spent for the proper services delivered to the proper children in need. Additionally, the federal funds cannot be co-mingled with state or local funds even though both are providing the same services to the same children.

The web of protections, procedures, accountability and educational processes that must be followed is rapidly leading toward program implementation which is more and more focused upon compliance with the letter of the law and less and less upon carrying out the educational intent of the law. Further, the various requirements of different laws often lead to outcomes which do not further the overall goal of equal educational opportunity for all.

The most recent example of this kind of outcome is seen in the required-by-law test as enacted in Public law 95-561 ("The Education Amendments of 1978"). The purpose of this test is simple enough. If any other law, state or federal, requires that services must be provided to all students or to certain kinds of students, then Title I funds should not be used to provide these services. The rationale is also simple—if the school must provide these services regardless of funds received, then if Title I funds are used to provide such services, the school could use the "other" funds replaced by Title I for whatever purpose the school wanted to. This would be a classic case of how Title I funds are used to supplant "other" funds rather than *supplement* the "other" funds.

As mentioned previously, it seems clear enough that the replacement of *base* school funds by Title I funds would thwart federal intent for additional services for educationally disadvantaged children. However, it becomes significantly less clear that replacement of *categorical* school funds by Title I funds is necessarily a thwarting of federal intent.

With regard to expenditure of state and/or local compensatory education funds, the only sure way of avoiding entanglement with the federal government is to duplicate Title I requirements exactly. If there are variations in the rules governing state or local compensatory funds, then much more elaborate allocation processes must be followed and much closer scrutiny is exercised by the Department of Education. Despite the complexity of ensuring compliance with the Title I requirements, the processes worked out by California as a result of the ruling in the *Alexander vs. Califano* case allows a remedy which permits some state and local discretion in providing compensatory education services while ensuring equitable protection for the Title I eligible children.

Such remedies may not be available with regard to services for limited and non-English speaking students, services to meet the special educational needs of handicapped children, and services to prepare students to meet mandated proficiency requirements.

In particular, the Supreme Court ruling in the *Lau vs. Nichols* case stated that equal educational opportunities for limited and non-English speaking students could only be provided by taking affirmative action to assure equal access for such children to the entire school program. School districts must make such affirmative actions regardless of whether or not they received additional funds for such purposes.

If the current narrow interpretation of the Title I statute holds, it would insist that Title I funds cannot provide services for limited and non-English speaking students to overcome their linguistic difficulties—as such services are mandated by the *Lau vs. Nichols* ruling.

If a state has a significant limited and non-English speaking student population and recognizes their needs and provides state funds to meet those needs, the result can be a lessened capability of combined federal and state funds to meet the need. While Title I recognizes the uniqueness of bilingual education funds as far as granting them exemption from the comparability requirements, it does not recognize any such exemption from the supplanting provision.

Lack of exemption from the supplanting requirements would make little difference if the populations served by the two programs (compensatory education and bilingual education) were synonomous; however, they are not. Educationally disadvantaged students are eligible to receive services only to the extent they are located within the eligible school districts and, within those districts, in eligible schools. Limited and non-English speaking children are eligible to receive services, no matter their location.

In California, this difference was recognized by the legislature which mandated services be provided by state funds to limited and non-English speaking students who were not otherwise being served. The thought of the legislators was that those limited and non-English speaking students already receiving the necessary services should be skipped so that the "new" dollars could reach those children not being served. "Wrong!" adjudged the Office of Education: Title I funds meeting the educational needs of LES/NES would have to be replaced by the "new" state dollars, or the district would be supplanting.

The effect of this ruling is to replace Title I funds providing services to LES/NES with state funds targeted for that population. The Title I funds thus released must go to the next eligible Title I School which may or may not have LES/NES students. Thus, numbers of LES/NES students who could be served by a combination of state and federal funds could be diminished to the point where only state funds could be used.

This outcome can also occur in meeting the needs of handicapped students. Public law 94-142* requires that free appropriate public education be provided to all students with handicapping conditions; it thus mandates the provision of special educational services for such children regardless of the source of funds for such services. If the "strict constructionists" prevail, the ruling would be that Title I eligible handicapped children may *only* be served by Title I funds if they are first served by PL 94-142 funds.

Perhaps even more difficult to deal with will be the likely effect of "strict construction" with regard to statewide proficiency requirements. Such requirements may or may not (most likely not) have additional funds tied to them; however, all school districts will be required to meet proficiency standards (in California, standards of their own choosing). Therefore, because such services are "required by law," Title I funds may not be used to provide them to help students meet the standards.

The educational world is already sufficiently confused by attempting to distinguish between compensatory reading services and remedial reading services—now reading services provided to students to meet proficiency standards may have to be distinguished from compensatory reading services.

If all the foregoing is arcane it then truly represents the condition federal aid to education has gotten itself into by the late 1970's. For a variety of good reasons, federal aid to education has become fiscally oriented rather than educationally oriented.

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* "The Education of All Handicapped Children Act"

Faced with the necessity of demonstrating accountability, the federal government has increasingly insisted that federal funds must be accounted for down to and including the individual child. What has been lost sight of is the original federal objective—equal educational opportunity and the provision of educational services contributing toward that goal.

A result has been a rising litany of lack of local control, the favoring of some children over others, the oppressiveness of monitoring and evaluation by "outside agencies", the unwarranted intrusion of parents into the educational decision-making process, the rigidity of the funding process, the burden of state and/or federally imposed "paperwork" and rising tide against categorical programs in favor of "block grants" which would "restore" local control and local flexibility.

It seems clear that current federal prescriptions with regard to federal aid to education need to be revised. If they are not, the entangling web of multi-requirements will place local educational agencies in a "cocoon" preventing movement in any direction. The political momentum of vouchers and tax credits will increase and the public education system will suffer—perhaps ruinously.

* * *

If the federal priorities are to be maintained and the overall goal of providing equal access to all students to the entire school program is to be pursued, then the requirements for accountability must be maintained. However, the mechanisms for the necessary accountability must be changed. Currently the accountability mechanism is essentially fiscal. As seen above, this mechanism has probably passed its limit of usefulness. Further tightening of the fiscal controls to account for the funds expended on individual students can only lead to greater rigidity and less education.

It also seems clear that such tightening of fiscal controls can only produce more and more auditors attempting to "track dollars" and demand school site accounting offices to account for each dollar that comes to a school. The cost and effort of installing such a fiscal control system is not only prohibitive, but also unnecessary.

The overall federal concern should be: first, that the educational system of this country is providing effective and useful education service and next, that federal money is spent to provide necessary services to assist particular populations in obtaining an equal educational opportunity. The key element in reaching this goal should not be the funds, but rather the necessary services—as long as the student is receiving *all* the necessary *quality* services he or she needs, the level of funding or the identity of the funds should not be of concern. Thus, the accountability mechanism should be a mechanism that is primarily accountable for the services delivered.

An accountable service delivery system should be able to ensure that programs of sufficient size, scope and quality are provided. This can be done by top down management, monitoring and evaluation—a solution which would mean increased federal and state staffs. Or, such a system can be the purview of a local monitoring and evaluation structure.

Since the inception of Title I, federal law makers have insisted on the necessity of including parents in the decision-making process. The federally inspired mechanism for accomplishing this purpose has been parent advisory councils. Federal education laws each have specific requirements for the composition, formation and responsibilities of each of "their" parent advisory councils. Many states have paralleled these requirements with similar requirements for state funded educational programs.

Public law 95-561, for instance, requires specific percentages of parents, establishes selection procedures and states that each local educational agency shall give each advisory council responsibility for advising it in planning, implementation, and evaluation of its programs and projects assisted by Title I funds. There are similar requirements for bilingual education, special education, vocational education, and other federal education parent advisory councils.

Thus, over time, parent advisory councils have been viewed by the federal government as a means of broadening the educational decision making process, enhancing the concept of shared responsibility for the educational outcomes and acting as an accountability mechanism. However, three basic flaws have become clear with regard to the federal concept.

One flaw has been the proliferation of separate parent advisory councils for each separate program. This trend, combined with state trends along the same lines, can lead to the situation in which a school district can have as many as nine parent advisory councils advising it on educational programs—each with its own educational agenda focused upon its particular constituent groups. An outcome of this situation is that other than the school district or school administration or governing board, in most states, there is not a parent group that tries to integrate and coordinate the entire district or school educational program.

Beyond the difficulties arising from this proliferation of advisory councils is also the problem that separate parent advisory councils for each categorical program contribute to the notion that categorical programs are only the concern of their constituents and that such programs operate as adjuncts to the "regular" school programs, not as a part of them. It also contributes to the notion that only special need students require extra attention and more careful individual diagnosis and prescription. Finally, it allows the continuation of a perception that different parts of a community only interact with a school when those programs "made for them" are affected.

Another flaw is that federal desires to ensure effective parent participation have led to the federal government, in several instances, insisting upon parent control of the parent advisory councils. (For instance, in Title I, parents must represent 51 percent of the parent advisory council membership.) In many cases this arrangement leads to a "we-they" syndrome, and the participation of parent advisory councils in the district or school decision-making process is adversarial in nature rather than collaborative.

A further flaw, partly due to majority parent representation requirements, partly due to overall school governance issues, and partly due to the categorical nature of parent advisory councils is that the parent advisory councils are advisory only. They can *advise* the district and school as to what they think ought to be done, but districts and school administrations (at some risk) can do as they wish with regard to major educational decisions. Parent advisory councils, as they exist in the federal concept, have little real control over the expenditure of funds or over the size, scope and quality of the programs and/or projects offered by districts and/or schools.

The success of a school depends upon the involvement in the educational decision-making process of the entire community—the community at large, the parents, the instructional personnel, the administrators and the students.

Unless all of the parties are actively involved in making education at a school a success, such sucess is unlikely to occur.

We only need to point out the following:

- As the population of this nation ages, more and more adults will not have children in school (currently only 25 percent of our adults have children in school); thus, involvement of all adults of a community rather than just parents is necessary if schools are to be supported by a majority.

- As highlighted many times by district and school personnel, schools cannot replace the family as the primary educators of children; however, societal changes have placed more and more of this task upon schools. The way to reduce this growing imbalance would be to get parents more actively involved in their children's education.
- It is a truism that no school program can be successful without the active commitment of those actually providing the instructional services in the classroom. Without a sense of shared responsibility and partnership, instructional personnel will not have the necessary commitment, and, under the current system, they generally do not have a sufficient opportunity to share.

Eight years ago, as it became more apparent that the educational system in California needed to be looked at as a whole, that categorical approaches were leading to educational stagnation and that the educational decision-making processes were not serving to unify the education system, the Superintendent of Public Instruction convened a broadly representative group to develop a plan and a concept for improving education in the state.

Among the conclusions reached were that, first and foremost, there was a need to find a way to implement what we already know and that we did not need to concentrate on inventing new learning theories and/or methods. Next, no single plan could dictate the elements of an effective school program from above. Further, interested parties at the school site, those closest to children, needed to form a partnership and receive incentives, direction and support from the community and from above to put into practice what they knew could better accomplish the delivery of educational services. Finally, the needed incentives, direction and support as well as the necessary advanced planning for such change would require additional resources specifically earmarked for such purposes.

We recognized the continuing need for improved use of categorical funds as well as the improved use of general school funds. We also recognized the need for greater accountability. Implicit in all of our discussions was the idea that overall improvement of the delivery of educational services in the school would represent a clear improvement of the services for children with special needs. We stressed the notion that while looking at (and providing funds for) the whole school, extra funds would be required for such children.

This became the Early Childhood Act of 1972 and was initially directed to begin first in selected schools in a phase-in for grades kindergarten through three. One half of the schools selected had to be schools with large numbers or concentrations of children from low income families. In 1977 the program was expanded to make all elementary and secondary grades eligible. Schools have been gradually phased into the program since its inception in 1972. About 60 percent of all public elementary school children and 12 percent of all secondary students are now served by the program.

A basic concept of the school improvement program is that schools can only truly respond to the need of students if they systematically build into their operation a cooperative school/community process for self assessment, goal setting, program planning, outside evaluation, and program modification. This process is necessary in all schools, regardless of the characteristics of the populations served.

At the heart of the school improvement program is a mechanism to ensure accountability and proper implementation of the program—the school site council. The school site council through composition, selection and authority corrects the basic flaws of the parent advisory council mechanism.

The school site council is composed of representatives of the administrators, the instructional and other school personnel, the parents and the community, and, in the case of secondary schools, the students. There is parity between the school staff representatives and the representatives of the parents, and students. This equal representation between the community and the school, we believe, helps to create a shared responsibility for the school and its programs. Further, it helps create a collaborative partnership to forward education objectives.

The selection of school site council memberships is done by each group represented—teachers select teachers; parents, parents; students, students; etc. No one group is allowed to dominate the selection process, and each group is assured of proper representation.

The school site council's responsibility and authority (unlike the authority of parent advisory councils) is not to advise in planning, but to develop the school site plan. This plan includes the identification of student's needs and the integration of specific coordinated strategies to meet the needs. Funds allocated in the School Improvement Program as well as the base school funds are subject to review and direction of the school site council. Additionally, the school site council has the responsibility to help ensure the proper implementation of the plan and to participate in the evaluation of the plan.

If the school site council determines that pupil achievement in reading should be increased, the school plan would identify how this is to be accomplished: what textbooks and other instructional materials are required; what staff development program will equip teachers and aides to give more effective reading instruction; what special materials and services will be used to document children's progress—in the classroom, from one teacher to another; how parents can be equipped to assist the children; how the library will be used to promote reading skills; what the time line is for each activity; how the school's other activities relate to and become supportive of the reading program; and how the school improvement program funds will be budgeted to accomplish the planned goals.

Since the plan is schoolwide, integration among the activities of the grades or classrooms is built into the process. Classroom activities are coordinated and centered on mutual, agreed-upon goals. Instead of isolated classrooms, the school is perceived as units which are connected together by the plan and for which responsibility is shared among all participating adults. Additionally, the plan assists in developing an entire schoolwide approach toward providing a continuum of skills to be reached as children progress through the grades.

While we are not suggesting that the school improvement model necessarily could be applied nationally, we are suggesting that the federal educational strategies and programs should be designed to encourage the development of incentives and mechanisms which provide for improvement of schools, focus accountability upon services delivered at the school site, and which involve the entire local community in a partnership for better educational programs.

Such federal educational strategies and programs can be accomplished by several interrelated mechanisms and processes:

- broadening the educational decision-making process at the local level to include the entire community.
- providing for local responsibility to ensure necessary appropriate services are provided to all children.
- assigning local responsibility for accountability (to include proper implementation and evaluation).
- insisting that necessary educational services provided for special needs populations are considered in the context of all educational services provided at the school.
- providing the necessary leverage for success.

The basic structure to carry out a school program for success should be a school site mechanism which would represent the entire community and which would have the responsibility for developing a school plan and ensuring the implementation and evaluation of the plan. Such a school mechanism would be responsible for ensuring the necessary appropriate services are provided to all children, including special needs children.

Accountability for federal funds can be accomplished by ensuring fiscal accountability to the school—i.e., those schools with student populations adjudged by the federal government to be in need of special assistance. Most local education agencies have sufficiently detailed fiscal accountability procedures for it to be relatively easy for federal or state fiscal auditors to monitor the allocation of categorical funds to the proper schools.

Once at the school, however, the focus should shift from fiscal accountability to service accountability in which a school site mechanism ensures that the necessary services are provided to the students at that school.

The composition and authority of the school site mechanism should ensure a process which protects the rights of special populations, but also ensures that the entire educational process of the school is integrated and coordinated to provide equal educational opportunity to all students of the school.

This would not be a "block grant" process. Nor would it be a "general aid" process, but rather a process which ensures special educational strategies for specific populations integrated into the entire school program. Such a process should not only upgrade the services provided to those with unique needs, but also upgrade the base upon which supplementary services are provided.

* * *

Federal aid to education is an important and necessary part of the entire school finance picture. Diminishment of the federal fiscal commitment to education would be a serious impediment toward accomplishing the goal of a free appropriate public education for all students.

The primary emphasis of federal aid to education should continue to be to provide equal educational opportunity to all segments of our population. But this emphasis must be encouraged and supported by all elements of the population—the community at large, parents, the school-age population, the school administration, local governing boards, instructional personnel, and students. Such encouragement and support can only come through processes and mechanisms which ensure shared responsibility for the entire school program and shared responsibility for the provision of appropriate services to each child.

Federal education funds should continue to be provided on a categorical basis to the unique populations in need. However, accountability for such funds should be at the district level and should ensure that the funds go to the proper schools. Accountability *within* schools should *not* be fiscally oriented, but should be service oriented and the accountability mechanism should be a school site council with responsibility and authority to ensure the provision of appropriate services as funded by all sources, local, state and federal—categorical and general.

Education should remain the primary purview of state and local educational agencies. The federal role in education should be focused on supplementing and assisting the meeting of national priorities and needs. Funding for education should remain as it is now with state and local educational agencies providing the bulk of the funding and federal education funds supplementing these efforts.

We need to make our education system a system supported and governed by all, not just special interests. We need to make it a system in which we all bear part of the responsibility and in which we all share that responsibility. We need to avoid the straitjacket of federal controls which could prevent people and programs from forming a partnership for success in our schools. Our public education system is at the heart of our "noble experiment," and is its epitome, and must remain so.

The conservative resurgence that has marked the early Eighties has focused a considerable amount of its attention on federal education programs. It has found remarkedly little to praise, much to question, during this review.

The following selection—drawn from the Executive Summary and policy analysis of the Heritage Foundation's Mandate for Leadership *report—articulately expresses the major conservative critique of federal policy directions in education.*

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ronald F. Docksai*

Reshaping the Federal Role in Education

The mission of a federal education agency is directly determined by the nature and scope of the authority granted to it by its authorizing legislation. This legislation should be altered to shift significant departmental responsibilities to the state and local levels, as proposed by Congressman John Ashbrook, Senator Orrin Hatch and others. The Department of Education can be reduced in size and budget, and its relation to state and local education authorities can become supportive rather than interventionist. State authorities would reassume programmatic responsibility for elementary and secondary education, and would attain greater administrative authority over current grant programs. To achieve these goals, a new administration must count among its first priorities the revision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and review of the administration of the Higher Education Act including a comprehensive review of their appropriation bills in order to recommend an incremental reprogramming of money authorities back to the states.

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(This article originally appeared in a longer version in the Heritage Foundation's Mandate for Leadership *(c. 1981, The Heritage Foundation), and is reprinted by permission of the Heritage Foundation.)*

ESEA should be completely restructured to shift educational decision-making back to the state and local levels and to eliminate most of the enormous paperwork and administrative burden. The Ashbrook bill (H.R. 7882) is a workable model for the kind of restructuring which would accomplish this with substantial support from the education community.

As the Department of Education divests itself of some of its administrative responsibilities, there will be a substantial reduction in personnel, as well as a reduced federal presence in our schools. But this need not mean that the federal role in education must be passive or that the government should abandon its legitimate concerns about the quality of American education. Rather, the federal government will be freed to pursue a far more effective role in helping our schools and colleges improve their performance. This should be the basis on which the Secretary of Education explains his policy of reducing his department's controls over American education.

There are three types of educational activity in which a more active federal role is desirable. They have been eclipsed in recent years by the government's increasing involvement in the process of grant administration, but could be revitalized to give substance to a new federal role in education. They are: 1) information gathering and dissemination; 2) consultation and technical assistance in dealing with on-site teaching problems; and 3) educational research and development. These were the traditional duties of the old U.S. Office of Education. They have been neglected in recent years, despite the initiatives of the National Institute of Education, and in the past they were seldom performed with great distinction or impact. Yet there is a tremendous need for these kinds of services to education, and there is the potential for doing them effectively. It is not true that the federal government must be coercive to be effective in education. On the contrary, while educators and school administrators are receptive to genuine help, they resent and resist federal interference and the threat of fund cut-offs. Most of these impositions (e.g., school busing) have had a disruptive effect on education and on the federal government's relationship to the local community.

1. Information gathering and dissemination are two activities which can be best accomplished at the federal level, and the need for these activities is great. Anyone who has dealt with education statistics knows that they are pathetically inadequate for analysis of problems or as the basis of policy-making. The machinery for

gathering education data is totally inadequate, even as it is performed by the Department of Education. The establishment of a comprehensive, timely and reliable education information system is a task which ought to be performed at the federal level, and one which is necessary for the improvement of educational quality. Any federal education office which succeeds the Department of Education, should it be abolished, should handle this among its principal tasks.

2. Consultation and technical assistance on educational questions should be handled by the federal government as a service to state and local government. The services rendered should be of high quality, practical in nature, and offered on a cooperative, not coercive, basis. Here is an area where the federal government is positioned to attract the limited number of genuine experts who can offer advice on such educational fields as vocational and technical education, adult education, education of the handicapped, the disadvantaged and the non-English speaking.

3. The results of federally-funded research and development in education have been, at best, spotty and inconclusive; at worst, they have been programs for indoctrinating students in ethical relativism and social determinism. Research necessarily involves a certain amount of failure and spent effort, especially in a field like education where many promising concepts do not produce the anticipated successes, and sometimes appear to reverse the learning process. But research and development projects, if oriented toward practical problem-solving, rather than "values clarification," can be worthwhile. For instance, it would be particularly helpful to investigate what methods would best work in dealing with youth unemployment.

In this regard, the new administration should have a strong commitment to vocational education. Vocational education programs serve 20 million young people and adults, and currently receive $750 million annually in federal funds. They have long enjoyed bipartisan support. Reconsideration of the CETA Title IV-A youth employment programs (the authority for which expired September 30, 1980) and reauthorization of the Vocational Education Act should be the occasion of an examination of federal policies and programs.

Concerning the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) within the Department of Education, it must be said that this office with its civil penalties and enforcement authority has been destructive of good federal-state relations in educational policy. OCR since its inception has been the vocational haven of class action advocates who have zealously carried out their interpretation of the letter of the law, while violating its spirit and intent. If OCR demands outrageously detailed and expensive data from schools and colleges, no one dares challenge it because it currently enjoys ready access to the Secretary and the President. The best interest of education and law enforcement is served by preventing the federal government's legal harassment of schools and colleges. But unfortunately, OCR's legal challenges of the policies of schools and colleges seems to serve its current administrative interest. A change is required both in policy and personnel in OCR (and in the Justice Department). But this may be possible only after the most careful political preparations have been made. The interest groups supporting OCR's present policies are well organized and will be directly affected by any change in OCR's power or policies.

In principle, the Department of Education should be abolished as a Cabinet department. But the authors of this report take the position that the status of the agency as a Cabinet department is less critical to a new administration than the overhaul of federal education *policy*. The proposals presented in this report, if implemented, will do more to restore a healthy federal role in education than the mere abolition of the agency's Cabinet rank.

It is clear that the Department's continuing interference with local and private education, and its threats of coercion have not improved the quality of education. Conservatives must develop a more genuinely "federal" education policy, a program of federal and state cooperation. By removing the adversarial atmosphere which currently exists, a conservative administration would better manage the limited financial and human resources that it can bring to bear on educational problems.

Weaving Gold Back Into Straw

It is the common assumption of the authors of this report that the creation of this Department was a mistake, that its enactment is analogous to an inversion of the proverbial miller's tale, spinning something fine back into something coarse.

The authors of this report, to different degrees and for different reasons, recognize and support a role for the federal government in national education policy. But they agree that the new Cabinet level Department of Education has in its maiden period made education policy more amorphous as a collection of programs to be implemented; less accessible to parents, community and state leaders desiring and deserving a direct role in education policy; and more bureaucratized, allowing an ever-decreasing level of discretionary authority to state and local education authorities.

The authors of S. 210, which set up the Department, appeared to respond to widespread concerns that the establishment of a Cabinet level agency would undermine the traditional independence of locally-run public schools. They put in the legislation's report language long and bravely-written commandments against further federal encroachment. The provision for an Intergovernmental Advisory Council is intended to check any future federal expansion, and there is a proscription in the legislation against any federal pre-emption in the shape and conformity of state education programming.

However, in the short time the Department has been in existence, an established collection of literature has developed chronicling the administrative excesses of the Department, the wasted time, money and energies that have failed to improve educational quality or extend its reach. For the most part, and given the most ideal of circumstances, the authors of this report would prefer to erase what Congress has done during the past two years. We would develop a federal education policy which restores authority to the states and local communities, and increases their discretionary funding power.

Because circumstances are likely to be considerably less than ideal, however, this report's recommendations are presented as options which can be taken in whole or in part by planners at the Executive level.

Current Policy Assumptions and Deficiencies

Elementary and Secondary Education

To a degree probably unique among the major departments, the mission and role of the Department of Education is shaped by the design and content of the legislation it is given to administer. If all or most of the many and detailed aid-to-education acts within the Department's jurisdiction were replaced by one or two block grants, most of the Agency's workload would be eliminated. There would be one other result: the Department's influence on state and local education policy and practice through discretionary grant authority would disappear. Few people have ever read or tried to read the text of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Title I, in particular, is written in such complex, convoluted, involved language that it almost defies attempts to decipher it. Literally hundreds of individual requirements and conditions, written in agonizing specificity, are scattered throughout the Act. Each *requires* regulation writing. Each *requires* monitoring education agencies for conformity. If the role of the federal government in education is to be changed, the Department must alter its relationship to state and local agencies and educational institutions. This can only happen if the legislation is rewritten.

Instead of the present labyrinth of prescriptive programs, a basic policy assumption of the federal role in education should be to provide needed financial support with a minimum of administrative burden. We should resurrect the traditional role of the old U.S. Office of Education to provide basic information about the status and needs of education and to fund needed research in education. Accordingly, one of the highest priorities for immediate action must be a comprehensive overhaul of federal education legislation. There is growing support in Congress as well as in the "education community" for such action, but that support could be quickly lost through the advocacy of overly simple solutions. Just saying "block grants" will not suffice. Some federal programs do not lend themselves to this treatment (e.g., student financial aid) and others are already essentially "block grants," though broadly directed toward a purpose (e.g., vocational education).[1]

Moreover, there are education programs which have been established because it is said that they are in the national interest. Special assistance for the disadvantaged (title I, ESEA), the education of handicapped children, student aid, and aid for vocational education are prominent examples of categorical aid programs. To emphasize the national interest in them, these might be continued as categorical aid programs—with the caveat that the legislation in each case should be simplified as much as possible, with federal aid emphasized and federal controls reduced to a minimum. This, too, can only be achieved by re-writing the legislation.

The pending reauthorization of the Vocational Education Act represents still another opportunity to stress traditional values (employment, job preparation, productivity, etc.) while simplifying over-grown legislative detail. This, too, would result in an altered federal role which emphasizes state and local responsibility for decision-making.

Again, the fundamental mission of the Department of Education should be to assist education in the national interest, but without interference in the fundamental responsibilities of state and local educational agencies.

To summarize the deficiencies of federal policies for elementary and secondary education:

1. Numerous categorical aid programs authorized by extremely detailed and prescriptive legislation result in interference in the operation of state and local school systems and costly and time-consuming administrative burdens which are counterproductive.
2. A host of grant programs for narrowly categorical purposes distorts state and local institutional program choices, which have to be shaped to meet federal priorities in order to qualify for the funds.
3. Formula grant programs chopped up into narrow categories of assistance automatically mean that federal funds are available for the specified purposes only in the amounts determined by formula—which from state-to-state and year-to-year would bear no necessary relationship to actual program needs.
4. An additional number of discretionary grant programs greatly increases the federal "clout," since recipients must compete for the funds solely on terms laid down by Washington bureaucrats.
5. All of the above make it possible for the federal government to influence to an enormous extent the policy and practice of public education, even though the government "contributes" no more than 7 percent of the funds that pay for public elementary and secondary education.

Higher Education

It is discouraging to realize just how much of contemporary discussion about education concerns the role and responsibilities of the federal government. Many Americans currently regard education not as an end in itself, but as a means to accomplish ends prescribed by government: compliance with state plans, and conformity with federal guidelines and court orders. They spend their entire professional lives in the arcane business of negotiating an ever-expanding inventory of points at issue between government and education. And agencies have grown up within each which are creating systemic pressures to extend the patterns of future government regulation.

Institutions of higher learning, like all others in society, have been made subject to government regulation. But the imposition of regulations on colleges and universities has not been the result of careful policy-making by the current or previous Administrations. Two problems with federal regulatory activity are worthy of note: (1) because rules are imposed on institutions by a wide variety of agencies, no one is adequately concerned with the total regulatory burden on the institutions; and (2) the pursuit of accountability has resulted in deep federal intrusion into the academic affairs of educational institutions.

New rules to implement laudable social goals are imposed on educational institutions in ever-increasing numbers, but nobody is watching to see how much pain the victim can stand. It is costly to comply, and colleges and universities, like others who are so burdened, have limited resources. At some point, money and time devoted to implementing federal rules are taken from educational programs. If U.S. colleges and universities were to add the cost of compliance with federal regulations (such as OSHA requirements and those of Section 504 which mandates access for handicapped persons) to the cost of the maintenance they have deferred in recent years, most would discover they have been effectively bankrupt for some time!

The federal battle cry of "accountability" has brought about a significant federal intrusion into the academic affairs of colleges and universities by reversing the presumption of innocence. Recipients of federal assistance are presumed guilty unless federal investigators and auditors can be satisfied they are innocent. Unfortunately, the federal government fails to distinguish between responsible recipients of federal assistance and irresponsible ones; between high-risk and low-risk institutions. All recipients are guilty from the day they receive their first federal dollar.

In the name of accountability, no fact of college or university operations is free of federal scrutiny. Student admissions, faculty hiring, financial practices, student class hours, and even what faculty do with their free time—all are subject to federal examination and approval.

The federal presence on college and university campuses threatens the nature of the institution itself. In order to comply with federal demands, universities have staffed large business offices, admission offices, planning offices, audit offices, and the like. The president's role has been shifted from one of academic and administrative leadership to one of chief negotiator for and with bureaucracies. As the authority for decision-making is shifting from the faculty to the university bureaucratic offices, the decentralized structure of the institution, which fosters intellectual innovation, is threatened.

Any responsible federal administration must require that all recipients of federal funds reach generally accepted social objectives and that they develop good financial management systems, but it should assume that those federal objectives are met unless developments prove otherwise.

The obvious first step in a new national policy for higher education is to devise a new system of financing measures that relieves education's dependence on direct government financing, and thereby relieves the vulnerability of education to government controls.

Such a system of financing measures would include:

1. Enactment of pending legislation to extend the charitable deduction to all taxpayers, regardless of whether or not they itemize deductions, to stabilize and stimulate non-governmental support of education;
2. Reform of government student aid programs to maximize emphasis on direct payments to students and/or their families to help them meet education expenses, and to minimize direct payments to education entities;
3. Replacement of categorical grant programs with block grants based on costs of instruction and/or enrollments of government-aided students;
4. Remodelling of research support programs to maximize emphasis on, and incentives for, achievement of mutually agreed-upon research objectives; and
5. Coordinated initiatives, including financial incentives, to foster self-regulation in education, as a viable alternative to government regulation.

With the adoption of these financing measures, the government's role in higher education would be proscribed and limited to the business of recognizing tax-deductible contributions, processing payments to students, families, and educational entities, and obtaining proper accountings for the use of public funds. Both the need and the jurisdiction for government control of higher education would be ended, along with the rationale for agency structures to formulate government policies, to monitor compliance with such policies, and to threaten educational entities with deferral or termination of government financing if they fail to conform to government directions. Under such circumstances, it would become at least theoretically possible for American education to be restored to its historic position as a free and independent enterprise. In short, higher education could be conserved and replenished as an end in itself, rather than plundered to serve government's ends.

Problems and Options in Federal Education Policy

Department Legislative and Administrative Options

Legislative Options: It is virtually indisputable that the federal programs in elementary-secondary education have done more damage than programs in higher education: the former involve more detailed mandates and prohibitions, and test scores show that the quality of the schools has declined farther and faster than that of the colleges.

If he pays heed to the letter and spirit of the U.S. Constitution and the sorry experience of the 15 years since the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was passed, a President will try to transfer as much decision-making power as possible away from Washington back to state and local educators. The fastest practical way to do this is replacing ESEA with a system of block grants.

The programs under ESEA fall logically into two categories: (1) aid for the compensatory education of "disadvantaged" children, commonly referred to as "Title I"; and (2) everything else: aid for libraries, counseling, textbooks, innovative and experimental programs, bilingual education, metric education, arts education, consumer education, environmental education, health education, law-related education, population education, women's education, ethnic heritage programs, etc. Title I is the colossus: in dollar terms it is the single largest federal education program. Title I is also distinctive in that it allocates federal dollars among recipients according to a mechanical formula based on student population. The other ESEA programs distribute dollars on a "discretionary-grant" basis; states and locals apply for grants under each program, and the program's Washington administrators reward what they consider to be the "best" applications. Thus, these other programs give federal officials more opportunity to influence (or dominate) local decision-making than Title I, even though they do not involve nearly as much money. This point is especially important for the programs that are at present being used as captive vehicles by groups of ideological militants, such as the "Women's Educational Equity" program and the Title VII Bilingual-Education program.

Unless it's done in a fairly ambitious and comprehensive fashion, the "block-grant" reform is probably not worth doing at all. Consolidating only two or three of the dozens of elementary-secondary programs would not break up the mechanisms by which decisions are currently made, or transform the existing philosophy which is based on giving each special interest its protected slice of the pie. The four worthwhile options are as follows:

1. Consolidate everything *outside* Title I, except for the three best-entrenched programs: vocational education, handicapped education, and "impact" aid for school districts with large proportions of families who live or work on federal property.
2. Consolidate everything outside Title I, *including* the vocational, handicapped, and impact-aid programs.
3. Consolidate Title I together with the non-Title I programs other than vocational, handicapped, and impact-aid.
4. Consolidate Title I together with *all* non-Title I programs.

In 1978, when the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was being authorized, Congressman John Ashbrook proposed a substitute amendment which essentially embodied Option 3. The amendment failed by a vote of 79 to 290.

In the summer of 1980, Mr. Ashbrook introduced a more moderate proposal: similar to Option 1, but somewhat simplifying the Title I programs to reduce paperwork and shift major decisions from the federal to the state level (H.R. 7882, the Education Improvement Act). This proposal was designed to have a chance of passage in 1981 even if there are no major upheavals in the partisan/ideological composition of Congress.

Any of these options would give state and local educators greater discretion to pursue their own priorities; would reverse the 15-year trend toward greater complexity and convolutedness in ESEA programs; and would make possible substantial cuts in the 1400 pages of federal education regulations, in the 10 million state and local man-hours now consumed by federal education paperwork, and in the payroll of the new Department of Education, which totals more then 5,000 full-time permanent employees (excluding staff of the overseas schools serving U.S. military dependents).

Obviously, Options 3 and 4 would go the farthest along this desirable path. But either would be vulnerable to the charge that the economically disadvantaged were unjustly losing their special entitlement to federal assistance under Title I.

Therefore, the new administration might want to consider a fifth option: keep Title I separate from all the other programs, and retain its character as aid specifically targeted for the disadvantaged; but transform it into a voucher system. *Eligibility* for this aid could continue to be based on the Orshansky poverty definition and on AFDC payments, just as at present; but the aid itself would go, *not* to local school districts and state departments of education, but directly to the parents of disadvantaged children in the form of vouchers which could be used for either public or private education.

Even if it did not pass, this proposal would make it impossible for anyone to accuse the Administration of "middle-class bias" in its advocacy of private-school tuition tax credits. (It would also lay the rhetorical groundwork for fighting for cuts in Title I appropriations under the existing structure.) If it *did* pass, the Administration would be rescuing the public-school monopoly's most helpless victims, the inner-city blacks and Hispanics, at a single stroke. This one victory would sound the death-knell for statist education.

Administrative Options: A federal law already on the books (General Education Provisions Act, Section 417) gives the administration great opportunity to identify and penalize mediocre education programs.

This law requires the Department of Education to state—in measurable, quantitative terms—the specific goals and objectives of each of its programs, and to report annually to Congress on each program's progress (and lack thereof) toward these goals. A 1977 GAO study confirmed that the U.S. Office of Education (as it was then called) was not in compliance with this requirement, and had never been in compliance, and did not intend to comply. Congress did nothing to penalize USOE for its non-compliance, and little has changed since.

The general evaluation reports provided to Congress under the law, averaging well over 500 pages, are masterpieces of equivocation. They try to avoid saying anything definite, and often rely on the dodge of measuring *inputs* rather than *results* (e.g., ESEA Title I succeeds in channeling funds to the most disadvantaged students, therefore it is meeting its objectives). They appear months after the statutory deadline, making it difficult or impossible for OMB or the relevant House and Senate committees to use them in making decisions about budget, appropriations, and reauthorizations.

But the private contractors who conduct most of the federally-commissioned education evaluations required by law do a surprisingly honest and accurate job. Groups like the Rand Corporation and American Institutes for Research have repeatedly produced findings which show that programs under study are ineffective or even harmful. Sometimes, these findings are couched in technical terms that only a professional statistician can decipher; consistently, the bureaucrats and Congress have disregarded negative results and proceeded to expand programs which are clearly doing positive harm to their intended beneficiaries, such as the ESEA Title VII bilingual programs.

A Secretary of Education should make it clear that he does have a clear objective against which all education programs will be evaluated: their contributions to the basic academic skills of reading, writing, and calculation, as measured by standardized norm-referenced tests.

He should schedule an early meeting with the evaluation chiefs of the leading contractors, and make it clear that under this administration, they will *not* be harassed for bringing bad news, as the American Institutes for Research was in 1977 when it told the truth about Title VII. They *will* be encouraged to make their conclusions in forthright, non-technical terms. (He should make sure not to imply that he wants their findings to be artificially slanted *against* the programs, either.)

The Secretary should also make it clear, in advance, that programs whose officials fail to cooperate with the evaluation process will be penalized when the time comes to set the proposals for their future budgets. The burden of proof will be on those who contend that a program makes a positive and significant difference; absent such proof, the program should not merely be "level-funded," but cut.

Federal Policy for Higher Education

Federal Regulations and Higher Education: An Overview

Colleges and universities are a unique industry for which federal programs have special import. But, in many respects, these schools are businesses like other businesses, and the effects of federal regulations upon schools are similar to the effects of federal regulations upon other businesses.

A multitude of general laws now influence the higher education community. The environmental protection laws, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Employment Security Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the recent and scheduled increases in social security taxes, and more, make college administration more expensive and complicated, just as these laws make all businesses more expensive and complicated.

Although no one factor sets higher education apart from other industries, several factors combine to define the particular significance of federal programs and requirements for higher education:

1. Colleges and universities are inevitably labor intensive. They employ 1.5 million people, a number that could hardly be reduced without a direct effect upon capacity. A substantial portion of this labor force must be highly trained, and therefore, university employees tend to be especially expensive. An extensive and expensive work force makes the federal income and retirement security programs especially onerous for colleges and universities that must pay all or a portion of the premiums for their employees. Social security is by far the most expensive of all federal programs for the schools. The scheduled increases in social security taxes will place a heavy burden on university budgets.
2. Colleges and universities have only limited control over their income. Only a portion of their financing comes from charges to customers, i.e., tuition. Tuition is set on a yearly basis. Income from investments depends on how well the investments do. Private giving is a chancy affair, and various levels of government control the rest of the financing. Even annual increases in tuition are problematic, especially for private colleges, whose tuitions are already higher than those of state subsidized public colleges. The private colleges fear losing students to the less expensive public colleges.
3. The decentralization of many universities makes it more difficult for them to comply with some federal requirements. Schools have had to establish interdepartmental and sometimes university-wide committees to set and enforce standards, to keep records, and to prepare reports for federal agencies. At times, the schools have been less than efficient in creating these committees. Committees often are unclear in their goals and operations, and not infrequently colleges have established organizations with overlapping or redundant duties. College departments do not want to relinquish their autonomy, a vital aspect of their "academic freedom." But federal interference with universities is spawning central administrative interference with individual departments, gradually transforming the structure of higher education in this country.
4. Colleges and universities are a handle on the future. They are at the center of America's science establishment. They select, mold, and position most of the nation's future leaders, executives, professionals, scientists, technocrats, and bureaucrats.

Consequently, the schools have come to be viewed by Congress as a tool of federal policy. They are thus subject to a plethora of federal enticements in the form of grants in aid. "Grants in aid" has always been something of a game since college administrators and professors have their own purposes, and are adept at diverting federal funds to ends that are questionable in terms of official goals. In response the federal government has become more of a task master, perhaps too much so. Grant recipients must make extensive efforts to justify their work. In addition, school administrations have recently been burdened with a detailed and perplexing document known as A-21. A-21 is the manual for calculating the "allowable" costs, including overhead costs, of federally sponsored projects. The bureaucracy is intent on knowing the uses and depreciation of facilities, and the percentage breakdown of the efforts of personnel.

Three major issues are entailed in federal involvement with higher education. The first issue focuses on questions of *effectiveness*: the second on questions of *affordability*, and the third to questions of *propriety*.

Efforts to manipulate research and education from Washington must be clumsy, since both defy standardization, and require onsight inspection. The more the federal government tries to discipline universities in their use of federal funds or prod them toward efficiency with detailed instructions, the more surreal these efforts will become. The schools will have to hire more people to process the documentation; the professors will have less time for research and teaching, and the bureaucracy will receive mountains of exceptionally boring material whose very complexity will invite convenient interpretations, both by the professors and by the bureaucrats. Confusion will reign.

Like most people, university professors want to be left alone with the goods. The federal government cannot responsibly dole out money without any attention to returns. But, perhaps the grants process can be made more businesslike. The government could contract for a certain product or effort, and after a reasonable time, the government could see what the taxpayers had gotten for their money. This judgement could influence further dealings with the relevant professor/researcher and with the institution that he represents. Of course, this process occurs now, but it is embellished with a multitude of details. More attention should be paid to results, and less to process.

The schools, especially private schools, unlike other businesses, cannot readily pass on additional costs to customers. Therefore, the increasing costs of employee benefits such as social security, and the increasing administrative costs of complying with federal regulations and meeting grant requirements are placing the higher education community in a financial squeeze. Although non-profit organizations are exempt from income and property taxes, these organizations must pay for social security or comparable benefits, and as the cost of these benefits increases, the true tax burden upon them increases. For this reason, college administrators tend to favor the use of general tax funds to buttress social security in place of increased social security taxes. Granting colleges some exemption from social security taxes would help college budgets appreciably.

A reduction in the administrative costs of regulations and grants would also be beneficial. Here, coordination would help. As of 1977, colleges dealt with 400 federal agencies that were supervised by more than 50 executive agencies. The new Department of Education is not likely to remedy this situation. Indeed, it may well become a springboard for more elaborate interference.

Despite the onus of employee benefits and the hassles with grant applications, the college administrators have remained relatively calm concerning these measures. The administrators and academics may grumble over the red-tape with which the government wraps its carrots, but no open rebellion is contemplated. It is quite another matter with another class of federal requirements.

These are requirements designed to promote "social justice" as defined by Washington. The requirements are alleged to be reasonable contractual stipulations, but the implied volunteerism of a contractual relationship is a legal fiction as far as colleges are concerned. College administrators perceive extortion behind these requirements. . .

Federal requirements are becoming increasingly expensive for the nation's colleges and universities. A 1976 study by van Alstyne and Coldren showed a dramatic growth in administrative expenses attributable to federal regulations. These costs increased for six universities over ten years from a negligible portion of their administrative budgets to between one-eighth and one-quarter of these budgets.

The burden federal regulations place on universities is counted in more than money. Increased federal intrusion is an aggravation to administrators and professors. It introduces into their consideration of personnel "functionally irrelevant" statuses such as race and sex. It inevitably leads to the ill treatment of qualified persons who do not belong to federally favored groups. It introduces an adversary relationship among all parties. It inundates the schools with tedious process. It introduces lawyers into situations in which they do not belong. Liberty suffers, and so do prospects for informal solutions.

Colleges and universities have not been singled out for federal interference; such is the plight and privilege of all American enterprise. Federal regulations affecting the schools are not substantially different from the regulations affecting other businesses. The complaints from the schools echo the complaints made throughout the business community.

The "social justice" directives such as Section 504, Title IX and Executive Order 11246 will be particularly difficult to reform or remove. They deal with extraordinarily emotional issues. Any effort at additional restraint on the part of the Office of Civil Rights will be seen by a variety of activists as a manifestation of "benign neglect", a retreat to sexism, racism, and indifference to the handicapped.

Nonetheless, reforms are needed. The burden of proof should be shifted. The schools should not be judged guilty until they prove themselves innocent. They should not be judged in advance. The OCR should be entirely neutral in its consideration of the evidence. Each side in a dispute should have to make its case.

The originator of a complaint should not remain anonymous. Currently, the OCR withholds the names of accusers to protect them from campus retribution. This policy is outrageous. Any person or persons calling on the federal government to act against any other person or persons should have the courage for confrontation. At any rate, people have a right to know their accusers.

Compliance with Section 504 should be tailored to a school's financial capacity to comply. Perhaps, a certain portion of a school's budget can be devoted to reasonable accommodation of the handicapped. Requiring massive changes without regard to cost is unreasonable.

Affirmative action is the sorest point of all. The proponents of affirmative action see it as the quickest and most practical means of upward mobility for America's women, Blacks and Hispanics. Its opponents see it as an attack on equal opportunity and merit selection. Affirmative action is perhaps a quick way to lift women and minorities into prominent or lucrative positions, but it is not necessarily the most just. Affirmative action has produced at least some demoralization and resentment among workers, and caused management to emphasize gender and race at the expense of skill.

Affirmative action does not run counter to American practice; it runs counter to American ideals. It should be jettisoned as soon as it is politically possible to do so. In the meantime, it should not be administered with a heavy hand. Prudence and tact should mitigate the adversarial relationship that Executive Order 11246 has established and nurtured between the federal government and academe.

DIRECTIONS FOR FEDERAL ELEMENTARY/SECONDARY EDUCATION POLICY

Alan L. Ginsburg, Marshall S. Smith and Brenda J. Turnbull*

Introduction

The basic purposes of the Federal role in the nation's schools have remained largely unchanged since 1965. At that time, a reformist Federal government set out to do two things that it believed the State and local authorities were not doing: improving access to education for unserved and underserved population groups, and enhancing the quality of the schools.

These purposes, introduced into law in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also underlie many newer Federal programs and policies. In addition, a few programs serve a third purpose: providing limited general support for the schools' regular activities with funds that are easily merged into regular operating budgets at the State or local level.* These three purposes dominate the Federal role in elementary and secondary education.

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* This paper is the product of a collaborative effort. The order of authorship was determined by lot. We are indebted to Michael O'Keefe, who participated actively in discussion of many of the issues considered here. We also wish to thank Beatrice Birman, Emerson Elliott, and Jay Moskowitz for their helpful comments on earlier drafts. [*Authors' note.*]

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This paper does not quarrel with these Federal purposes; we strongly agree that underserved groups must receive special attention, and that the Federal government has a role in stimulating improvements in school quality. Our concern is with whether current programs and policies are meeting these purposes. The traditional Federal strategies—identifying problems, establishing special-purpose ("categorical") programs, mandating the provision of certain kinds of services, and attempting to control the State and local use of earmarked funds—seem increasingly inadequate to the task of improving education.

Two alternative strategies are outlined in this discussion: (1) "cleaning up" the present program structure, and (2) adopting a new approach to local program coordination at the school-building level. We will develop the second strategy in some detail, suggesting that with the inclusion of appropriate accountability mechanisms it would permit the orchestration of Federal, State, and local resources into programs that would address all eligible students' needs without the administrative rigidities of current Federal programs.

Arguments for Reform

Four arguments suggest that we should reform Federal education programs. Each is discussed below.

Changing Economic and Social Conditions

Most Federal programs continue to address the same problems in the same ways year after year. Yet times change. One argument for program reform is that the economic and social conditions that face the schools now are different from those of 10 or 20 years ago. For example, the Federal program of Impact Aid continues to compensate districts for serving the children of Federal workers—an appropriate policy when the Korean War overwhelmed schools near military bases with children of non-taxpayers, but inappropriate now in the districts where Federal workers represent a stable, taxpaying population. Title IV of ESEA continues to support the purchase of library and instructional equipment, still addressing a shortage that was felt in 1965.

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* The Impact Aid program provides funds to the general budgets of local education agencies to compensate for such burdens as the presence of untaxed Federal lands within the local taxing area. In addition, Title IV of ESEA distributes funds for books and other materials used for instruction on an automatic, formula basis to school districts. Because Title IV provides only a very small amount of the materials budget of school districts, the Federal funds are substituted for funds that the local agency would otherwise spend and are, therefore, effectively general aid.

Old problems have given way to new areas of concern which Federal programs are slow to recognize. The test-score decline among students in the middle and secondary grades is the most visible focal point for current concern over school quality. However, the compensatory education funded by Title I, ESEA, remains heavily concentrated in the early grades. Another area of Federal weakness has been the lack of action on a major social problem that has developed over the past 25 years—that of unemployment among minority youths. White youth have had an unemployment rate of about 13 percent for 25 years, but the rate among black youths has jumped from 16 percent to more than 30 percent over that period.* Federal aid ought to be sufficiently flexible to address this kind of mushrooming problem.

Changing Federal-State Relationships

Fifteen years ago the State governments were not a dynamic force for educational improvement.** Federal policy has sometimes ignored the States and sometimes sought to correct what have been seen as their deficiencies. When ESEA was enacted in 1965, much of the legislation bypassed the States to work directly in local school systems. However, one program (ESEA Title V) offered the States relatively unrestricted funds with the long-range goal of strengthening their administrative capacity. In addition, all the formula-based programs have included a percentage of funds for State administration.

The States are different today. Over a dozen State education agencies administer their own compensatory programs, modeled on Title I. Nearly all the States have taken legislative or administrative action to test and improve students' competencies. In the education of the handicapped, reform of school finance, and other arenas for advancing equity, some States have taken the initiative in reform.

While a new sense of educational leadership has developed at the State level, this change is not adequately reflected in the Federal posture. Federal provisions have failed to draw upon the States' considerable financial and managerial resources that could be channeled to reinforce Federal program efforts. In addition, Federal policies represent a "*worst case*" approach to relationships between grant recipients and the Federal government—program requirements are geared to the expectation that all States will comply reluctantly, if at all. This approach creates unnecessary burdens for progressive States.

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* Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employment and Unemployment During 1978," Special Labor Force Report 218.

** See Jerome T. Murphy, *State Education Agencies and Discretionary Funds* (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1977).

In some cases Federal policies may actually impede supportive State activities. For instance, some States require remedial services for students who do not pass the minimum proficiency standards that the States have enacted for graduation or promotion. Yet such States could be prohibited from using certain Federal compensatory funds to assist children who fail. This could happen under a strict interpretation of the requirement that Federally funded compensatory instruction must not "supplant" services that would be provided in the absence of Federal funds (i.e., services that include remedial treatment mandated by State law). Meanwhile, States that do not mandate compensatory services have no such restriction placed on them.*

Finally, there are very few instances of Federal incentives in the ESEA legislation. States that expeditiously meet Federal goals or that are out in front of the Federal government in the provision of services to needy youngsters are not rewarded. Even in the few instances where incentive legislation exists, the political problems of treating States differentially have made the provisions ineffective. For example, no funds have been appropriated for a new part of Title I that offers a financial incentive for State compensatory programs. With fewer than 15 States eligible for this incentive, the political muscle to fund it has been lacking.

Proliferation of Federal Programs and Controls

The Department of Education now operates nearly 100 separate elementary and secondary programs. While each of these programs has a claim to existence in terms of a set of perceived needs and opportunities, the question of their cumulative effects must be carefully weighed. State and local governments annually require upwards of two million person hours to fill out all Federal reporting forms.* One result is a serious diversion of resources as State and local agencies develop special administrative cadres to deal with the Federal bureaucracy. On the Federal side, the result is almost certainly inconsistency, duplication, and reduced effectiveness.

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* The new proposed regulations for Title I attempt to accommodate this particular problem, although without complete success. States with *less* protection for needy youngsters who fail compensatory tests, in fact, turn out to be rewarded with fewer restrictions under the proposed rules. The "supplement, not supplant" legislative provisions for Title I are a classic instance of Federal legislation in the context of a "worst case" mentality—the regulations, which are a model of clarity given the incomprehensibility of the legislation, require 4,500 words of text in the *Federal Register* for local district administrators to plow through.

In addition to diverting resources, the proliferation of programs has led to erratic policies. A number of Federal programs generate *conflicting signals* for local and State program administrators. For example, the combined force of the fiscal controls in the Title I regulations and legislation strongly encourages schools to pull students out of their regular classrooms for Title I instruction. Bilingual classes are also separate from monolingual classes. Not only do these practices raise serious worries about the ill effects of tracking, segregation, and limited communication between special and regular teachers, they are also the opposite of the strategy mandated for handicapped children. The handicapped are to be educated in the "least restrictive environment" appropriate, which means the regular classroom wherever possible.**

New Knowledge

Not only are the conditions addressed by Federal programs changing, but our knowledge about education is growing. Recent research findings may be discouraging for anyone who hopes for quick and easy results from Federal grants, but they also suggest some productive approaches.

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* See Committee on Education and Labor, U.S. House of Representatives, 95th Congress, *A Report on the Education Amendments of 1978, H.R. 15* (Washington, D.C.; Government Printing Office, 1978), p. 138. Although the 1978 Amendments contain a variety of procedures for reducing burden, paperwork behaves like crabgrass—without constant attention it proliferates uncontrollably. Paperwork commissions and burden reduction reports proliferate with similar speed.

**An even more gloomy way of viewing the local results of program proliferation is to argue that services suffer when there are unclear lines of authority and responsibility in dealing with intractable educational problems. As long as multiple programs might serve a particular child, according to this agrument, no one bears the full burden of addressing the child's multiple needs. This line of argument suggests that program proliferation may be all the more counterproductive, but also that reform proposals may draw opposition from some educators who fear more clearly defined obligations. Vested interest in maintaining the status quo is not confined to local districts, of course—Washington-based lobbies have proliferated in direct correlation with program proliferation. Salaries and status often depend upon the identity of separate legislation rather than on the effectiveness of the program.

On the negative side, it is increasingly clear that administratively simple changes are essentially unrelated to student progress. Merely decreasing class size by a few students, mandating the introduction of a new curriculum, or hiring teachers with certain credentials will not guarantee improved achievement. Despite these findings, simple changes in school inputs continue to be the most visible and widely used yardstick in reports on the accomplishments of Federal programs.

On the positive side, no matter what the material, it is clear from abundant data that the time spent on learning is highly related to achievement. The simple but powerful research conclusion is that children are more likely to learn things if they spend more time focusing on them.* Yet studies of Title I programs suggest that participants who are pulled out of the regular classroom program to receive compensatory services do not spend more time in basic-skills instruction than their non-participating classmates do. Indeed, a very substantial percentage of students actually are pulled out of regular reading programs to obtain compensatory reading instruction—thus destroying both a posible gain in instructional time and the continuity of instruction that would exist if regular teachers had responsibility for teaching reading.

Research has yielded information about whole schools as well as about children and classrooms. In fact, several studies of unusually effective school programs converge in stressing the importance of commitment and capacity at the school building level. Critical elements in program success seem to be school characteristics such as strong leadership from the principal; high expectations for students; clear goals shared by the staff, students, and parents; and the atmosphere of the school (including student/teacher rapport and exchange of ideas among staff).* There also is evidence that new programs can take hold and succeed when, most importantly, there is commitment from local program staff and parents. These findings strongly suggest that the Federal government should try to help schools help themselves—to apply their resources in a more concerted and coordinated fashion to improve the instructional program as a whole. This approach contrasts sharply with the current Federal policies of top-down specification of program dimensions and of using fiscal controls to isolate Federal dollars and programs from the regular school program.

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* Recent research pointing to amount of instructional time as one of the more critical in-school factors determining student learning include: David Wiley and Annegret Harnischfeger, "Explosion of a Myth: Quality of Schooling and Exposure to Instruction, Major Educational Vehicles," *Educational Researcher* 3 (1974): 7–12; Benjamin S. Bloom, *Characteristics and School Learning* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976); and Carolyn Dirkham and Ann Lieberman (eds.), *Time to Learn* (Washington, D.C.: NIE, 1980).

Future Policy Directions

The foregoing arguments suggest an urgent need for rethinking the Federal program structure in elementary and secondary education. Federal policies should gain the flexibility to address current and future educational problems; they should build on State initiatives for educational improvement; they should reduce the tangle of special-purpose requirements facing local schools; and they should enable schools to implement coordinated programs planned around children's needs. Adopting such policies would not require a change in Federal purposes. Indeed, it would promote their achievement by changing accountability provisions from bookkeeping exercises to one based on educational criteria.

In our view these new policies cannot be effective if they are introduced piecemeal. Merely tinkering with one or two program provisions in a cumbersome categorical structure cannot do much to increase the effectiveness of Federal action in education. Consequently, this section will suggest two broad strategies for wide-ranging redesign of the programs: (1) cross-cutting reforms which "clean up" the present structure, and (2) a strategy for reform through enhanced coordination at the local school-building level.

An approach *not* suggested here is that of providing general aid to education from the Federal government. This strategy would break down the divisions among programs at the Federal level and cut the strings now attached to State and local uses of Federal aid to education. The great disadvantage of this approach is that, by eliminating accountability requirements, it sacrifices the Federal purpose of ensuring equal access to education for needy youngsters. Moreover, general aid would not actively promote educational improvement. We believe that aid specifically directed to educational access and improvement makes more effective use of Federal dollars.

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* See John I. Goodlad, "Can Our Schools Get Better?" *Phi Delta Kappan*, 5 (1979), 342–47; *Technical Summary: A Study of Compensatory Reading Programs* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, 1976); Ronald Edmonds, "Some Schools Work and More Can," *Social Policy*, March/April 1979, pp. 28–32; George Weber, "Inner City Children Can Be Taught To Read: Four Successful Schools," Occasional Paper No. 18, Council for Basic Education, 1971; Richard Williams, "A Political Perspective on Staff Development," *Teachers College Record*, 80, 95–106; Wilbur Brookover and Lawrence Legotte, *Changes in School Characteristics as Co-incident with Changes in School Achievement* (East Lansing, College of Urban Development, Michigan State University, 1977b).

"Cleaning Up" the Present Program Structure

One viable reform strategy would be to make a number of broad changes across programs and policies to update and simplify the existing program structure. Funding formulas would be redesigned and some programs eliminated in order to bring Federal priorities up to date. A few new program initiatives might be deemed appropriate, but the major emphasis would be on clearing away the clutter of overlapping and conflicting program provisions. In addition, such a reform strategy would enlist the States as active partners in Federal programs. The following discussion presents seven elements of this strategy.

1. *Redirecting funds to real needs.* Killing a program is almost prohibitively difficult politically since every program has its staunch defenders. Nevertheless, an economy-minded Congress must be willing to save some of the funds now expended on programs like Impact Aid or the Vocational Education basic grant provision, which have outlived some of their original purposes. These and other funding formulas might be changed to concentrate more tightly on cases of real need by increasing the allocations selectively, by removing anomalies that treat the same needs differently when they occur in different districts or States, or by cutting the funding that goes to places that no longer need it badly.*

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* An example of this strategy to improve the targeting of Federal funds is the new Title I "concentration" provision adopted in the 1978 ESEA Amendments. This provision redirects Federal compensatory education funds to those communities with large numbers of poor children (i.e., cities) or high proportions of such children (i.e., poor rural areas). Although the Congress rejected another proposal to redirect Impact Aid program funds to those places with the heaviest Federally imposed burden, the appropriations committees have recently shown renewed interest in such a proposal.

2. *New initiatives*. While attempting to limit or phase out obsolete funding programs, the Federal government might undertake a few new programs to fill the gaps left by the haphazard evolution of Federal policy. For example, current programs do not seem to meet the many problems for high schools: making sure that students have already mastered basic skills, imparting more complex cognitive skills, easing the transition from school to work, and opening postsecondary opportunities.*
3. *Reducing inconsistencies in Federal laws and regulations*. Inconsistencies between different but functionally related programs are particularly irksome to State and local education agencies and frequently contribute to confusion or cynicism about Federal objectives. One example, already discussed here, is the confusion that results between the Title I regulations that encourage special instruction in "pull-out" settings outside regular classes and the Education of the Handicapped Act that calls for instruction in "the least restrictive setting" (i.e., the regular classroom when possible).

   To filter out these conflicting signals, Federal policymakers would have to make some fundamental decisions about what practices to encourage, what populations to serve, and what local conditions to recognize. At present, such decisions come up piecemeal when each separate program is reauthorized, with the result that consistency across programs is seldom considered.
4. *Eliminating excessive categorization*. Another way of simplifying the Federal program structure would be to break down some of the divisions between programs, regrouping the smallest categorical programs into broader initiatives. Without altering the large programs for special-need pupils, the government could consolidate or terminate the small programs that support specialized priorities such as law-related, consumer, correction, health, environmental, or metric education, to name but a few. If support for such programs is still needed, it could be offered in broader categories, perhaps subject to

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* The growing national concern over youth unemployment gave rise to the Carter administration's proposed "Youth Initiative."

an annual determination of specific priorities.* Steps are already underway to standardize the administrative requirements for these and other small programs so that grantees will face a uniform, coherent set of forms and reporting requirements.

5. *Tighten the relationship of research, development, and dissemination with service programs.* Several agencies that have joined the Department of Education have carried out R&D—the National Institute of Education, the Office of Education, and the National Center for Education Statistics all take large R&D roles—but only with sporadic efforts at coordination. A serious problem is that R&D or dissemination activities are not systematically aligned with large-scale service programs. Putting the results of R&D into practice is a challenge under any circumstances, and the organizational distance between developmental and service programs compounds the difficulties. For instance, no administrative channels have been specifically set up to redesign Title I on the basis of what is learned from NIE programs, the new ESEA Title II (Basic Skills Improvement), or Follow Through. If such channels were created, findings from research, demonstrations, and evaluations could be incorporated into Federal regulations, guidelines, and technical assistance.
6. *Coordinating Federal and State Programs.* With the enactment of more and more special educational programs and provisions at the State level, the States and localities face increasing problems of sorting out the inconsistent or counterproductive demands of overlapping programs and policies. One example discussed above is the current difficulty over spending Title I funds on students who have failed Statewide tests and for whom remedial work is therefore required by State law. Programs for the handicapped and bilingual education provide other examples. Federal laws could work better if they were designed with the expectation that many State laws will echo Federal objectives, rather than the "worst-case" expectation now reflected: that State laws simply provide a basic program that can only be supplemented

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* During the 1978 reauthorization, proposals for consolidating the small programs were seriously considered. These proposals were ultimately rejected because many of the smaller programs represented "pet" initiatives of particular Members of Congress.

for special-need students through special and restrictive Federal requirements.

7. *Enlarging the States' role.* Building on the States' growing administrative capabilities and their adoption of many Federal aims, most programs could rely more heavily on State agencies. The 1978 ESEA Amendments have already expanded the State role in several functions, including monitoring and enforcing local compliance with Federal requirements. New provisions of Title IV and Title V mandate comprehensive State plans for coordinating all training of teachers and administrators. If they also choose to do Statewide planning for basic skills programs, States can receive special developmental grants under the Basic Skills Improvement title. Although these are reasonable first steps, the Federal law does not allow acknowledgment of more or less effective State plans—waivers of certain categorical requirements, for example, might be a reward for a well-constructed State plan for teacher training or for basic skills. In the future, other provisions within and across programs might increase the States' responsibilities for planning, monitoring and enforcement, and technical assistance. Wherever possible, these provisions should encompass several Federal programs so that the State can address complex problems without having to concentrate on one Federal aid category at a time.

   Another way of recognizing the initiatives of many States that share Federal goals would be to provide more funds on a matching basis. If a State legislature enacted a program for the disadvantaged, those of limited English proficiency, or another special-need group, it might receive a special matching allocation of Federal funds. This approach would permit differential treatment of the States, rewarding those States that are going beyond minimal compliance with Federal requirements and are themselves willing to support programs that address special educational needs.

Local Program Coordination

A second broad strategy for reform would be to combine existing programs in a different way, centering the consolidation at the local school level and providing new mechanisms for accountability. The central idea would be to let schools use their Federal and State categorical funds without regard to traditional fiscal controls—as long as they could demonstrate that they were meeting the purposes for which Federal funds were appropriated.

This approach would retain the targeted nature of Federal funds to the State, local agencies, and schools where there are high concentrations of needy youngsters. In addition, the Federal government would continue to insist that the special needs of students be given special attention—however, the particular nature of that attention would be less closely specified from the Federal level. That is, the Federal government would no longer require that separate programs within the school should address the needs of the disadvantaged, those of limited English proficiency, and so on. Instead the schools would be held responsible for defining each child's educational needs and devising ways to meet those needs as part of a coherent, building-wide educational strategy.

This would mean a shift to different accountability mechanisms which would focus on the way a school plans its programs, what services are delivered, or what the results are—as opposed to the current mechanisms which primarily aim to ensure the distinctness of school programs for each Federally defined purpose. As a result, specific Federal purposes would be less closely reflected in the way programs are organized within the school buildings. The point of the new accountability mechanisms would be reflected throughout the entire school in actual instructional services and outcomes.

We will outline five alternative accountability mechanisms. Any of them could permit this strategy of building-level coordination to be implemented in stages, with the Federal government loosening fiscal controls at the building level in those States and localities that demonstrate compliance with Federal educational requirements.

(1) *Fiscal standards.* Accountability based on fiscal standards would use information about local spending but, unlike the current fiscal controls, would not track each program's Federal dollars to determine that they are going to the "right" students. Instead, the Federal government would be concerned with the total number of dollars available at the school-building level to serve the particular mix of students in the building. For the average compensatory student, for example, the Federal standard might be set at 1.4 times the

average per pupil expenditure in a district—which is essentially the level called for in the Title I legislation.* Each school building, held accountable for spending that much on the average for its identified special-need students, could use any combination of Federal, State, and local funds to serve the students. This approach would allow building administrators the freedom to design appropriate programs to meet the particular needs of the students. Like the existing fiscal controls, however, this approach only asks that the level of funds be met—it does not directly address whether the services are appropriate.

(2) *Local program development requirements.* A second approach to accountability would be to stipulate procedures for schools to use in developing their education programs. These procedures would be designed to ensure the appropriateness of services and the involvement of school personnel and parents in planning.

At the school-building level, a comprehensive education plan developed by school personnel together with parents could address the needs of special categories of students (Title I eligible, handicapped, and bilingual) but would not constrain the school program to segregatory strategies such as pull-outs or completely separate bilingual classes. The new Title I statute permits substituting a staff-developed schoolwide educational plan for existing requirements in schools with large low-income populations, and such a plan could be extended to other schools and programs. This approach could provide valuable continuity within and across Federal programs and would give the whole staff a stronger sense of responsibility for the school's educational programs. It would spread the responsibility for Federally supported services beyond the extra teachers whose salary is paid by special programs, to the entire instructional staff. If the plan was developed in conjunction with parents, it would also serve as a local accountability mechanism and would inform parents about the goals and progress of the school.*

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* This approach is similar to the pupil-weighting systems a number of States have adopted in recent reform of their school finance legislation. See Jack Leppert, et al., "Pupil Weighting Programs in School Finance Reform," in *School Finance Reform: A Legislator's Handbook*, ed. John J. Callahan and William H. Wilken (Washington, D.C.: National Conference of State Legislatures, 1976).

(3) *Individualized education programs.* IEPs could extend the planning process down to the individual child. The Education For All Handicapped Act breaks new ground in this area by requiring such plans for all affected students and allowing for appeals when parents feel a plan is unacceptable. This type of planning draws attention to the instructional needs and capabilities of individual children while holding the schools accountable for providing the required instructional services. More needs to be learned about how to implement these plans, especially about designing instructionally meaningful programs and holding down the paperwork burden. Building on experience with the handicapped, the use of IEPs for all special-need populations, or indeed for all children, may become possible. A great advantage would be that children would no longer be labeled to fit into one of the Federal categorical classifications but would receive that mix of instructional services best suited to their individual needs and talents.

(4) *Service requirements.* Provisions specifying the kinds of services that schools must provide to certain kinds of children would go much further toward making the recipients of funding accountable for what they deliver to children. Such requirements might cover time on task (for example, children with reading problems would have to spend some minimum amount of extra time per week on reading lessons), pupil/teacher ratios, or the provision of workbooks to parents. This would be a direct way of using new knowledge about the services that contribute to learning. Still, even if we knew a great deal about what services to specify, Federal specifications would raise serious questions. First, the tradition of local and State control over curriculum would be gravely threatened. Second, inflexible specifications from the Federal level would represent the kind of "top-down" reform strategy that research is showing to be ineffectual. An alternative to Federal specification of service requirements is to employ the services specified in IEPs as the basis for the accountability structure. Here, the IEP would be developed

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* Such an approach would be similar to the school site councils functioning as part of the California "School Improvement" legislation. See *Manual of Requirements for Schools Funded Through the Consolidated Application* (Sacramento, Ca.: California State Department of Education, 1979).

according to a specified set of processes and the school would be held accountable for delivering the services spelled out in the IEP.

(5) *Outcome requirements.* An eventual step might be to move to student outcome standards, such as minimum achievement levels, to determine whether Federal objectives are being met. This approach has an appealing directness since the rationale for educational programs, after all, is educational benefit. Educators have valid concerns as to the ability to develop a sufficiently comprehensive set of outcome measures. These criticisms mean that we should go slowly in using this approach, but not that it should be rejected altogether. In bilingual education, for instance, outcome standards developed in 1978 may help tighten the program's focus on students who need services. Students have always been officially expected to leave transitional bilingual classes when they become competent to deal with the curriculum in English, but in practice such students have tended to remain in bilingual programs.* The ESEA 1978 Amendments now require testing students every two years to determine if their performance requires retention in transitional bilingual classes.

The use of IEPs might go a long way toward reconciling local differences with mandated Federal standards. IEPs could indicate outcome standards that are reasonable and achievable given available instructional approaches. Progress toward meeting these goals could be monitored and, if necessary, changes in the instructional program could be made if progress was too slow.

Discussion

This paper has argued that the present structure of Federal programs for elementary and secondary education is increasingly unwieldy and does too little to advance the goals of access and quality. We have also outlined two broad directions for reform. Of the two, we believe that the second, which more directly pursues program coordination at the local school level, offers the more promising foundation for educational improvement. Funds should continue to be targeted to the most needy districts and schools, but within the schools the nature of Federal involvement should change.

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* See *Evaluation of the Impact of ESEA Title VII Spanish/English Bilingual Education Program: Overview of Study and Findings* (Palo Alto, Calif.: American Institutes for Research, 1979).

Many problems of the current Federal role stem from the policies that maintain Federal programs at the school building level as fiscally and, thereby, programmatically distinct from the regular instructional program. These policies increase paperwork, fragment the school's staff, and encourage the educationally undesirable practice of segregating students with special needs into special classes, reducing the accountability of the school as a whole to needy students. Moreover, the fiscal requirements often operate as disincentives for the very State and local initiatives that Federal policymakers want to encourage. The issues of coordination among categorical programs, which are already difficult, seem likely to grow worse as new programs are added and existing ones expand.

Implementing a new approach to Federal aid will be far from simple. Some combination or streamlining of programs could be a sensible policy for change since the proliferation of similar and overlapping categorical programs from Federal and State sources has created a number of educational problems. If the services now within different programs are to be combined, however, strong acountability mechanisms must be devised. Special program funds should not disappear into the schools until there are plans at the level of the building and perhaps even the level of the individual child for meeting educational needs. In fact, schoolwide plans might be developed by aggregating the requirements of individual plans. Such planning, however, is not easy, and Federal policymakers must be careful that new requirements can work to promote thoughtful and responsive planning—not simply to multiply the schools' procedural headaches.

In summary, then, we advocate some continuity and some change in the Federal role in elementary and secondary education:

- Continuity in broad Federal purposes is essential. The national commitent to educational equity and quality is not outdated and should be maintained.
- Federal programs should be changed so that Federal aid will address these purposes more effectively. Problems with the current structure include a lack of flexibility, too little recognition of the State role, the proliferation of programs and mandates, and not enough incentive or opportunity for local program coordination.
- Selective changes, eliminating the program provisions that conflict with other programs or that discourage State and local

initiatives, could be accomplished either through a set of revisions in current programs or through the adoption of a school-based approach that would introduce new accountability mechanisms.

- A school-based approach to program coordination would maintain the targeting of funds on schools' needs and, within schools, promote the planning of sound instructional programs to address children's needs.

The preceding papers in this book have focused on the federal role in what could be called the formal educational system. But as Christopher Dede reminds us in the following selection, education is more than schooling— and in both its broader and more narrow senses the educational enterprise confronts a technological, demographic and financial revolution during the last part of the century.

THE NEED FOR A NEW FEDERAL ROLE IN THE 1980s

Christopher Dede*

In the past decade, the federal role in education has been defined in increasingly narrow ways. The 1960s were a time of broad federal expansion into new sectors of educational policy-setting, curriculum design, regulation, and funding. However, the high cost and unclear benefits of these increased responsibilities coupled with perceived meddling into state and local perspectives have gradually created widespread resistance to extensive federal involvement. As a result, especially in the last few years, continual pressure toward reducing federal activity has led decisionmakers—both inside and outside the national government—to picture the federal role in as constrained a manner as possible.

Much can be said for the importance of balancing the educational roles of the local, state, and federal governments and for the need to leave decision-making to the citizen, except for the minimum essential societal involvement. By limiting the federal role, individual, community, and states rights are preserved; the need for increased federal taxes is diminished; and the constitutional legitimacy of federal actions is not brought into question. Given this combination of factors, a federal policymaker finds it increasingly attractive to avoid bureaucratic tangles, higher budgetary needs, and increased responsibilities by refusing to deal with emerging educational issues under the guise of preserving a limited federal role.

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The fashionability of abdicating federal responsibility has reached such a height in Washington that I recently heard a high level federal decisionmaker at a public meeting state that, "long-range planning must be the sole responsibility of state and local governments, since the Constitution does not specifically mandate federal involvement in this area." No one in the room voiced an objection; perhaps they felt that the massive difficulties posed by such a stance were better, on balance, than the specter of nationally mandated, district-specific, comprehensive ten year plans for improving educational practice. However, I sensed the baby sliding down the drain along with the bathwater and found myself wondering if some intermediate position on long-range planning was not possible. Somehow, if the federal role is constrained without careful consideration of what each level of government is best equipped to do, the problems which are passed on to the states and localities may well be those which are the most difficult, expensive, and controversial, rather than those most appropriate.

In the next decade, what should be the relative roles of the citizen; community; and local, state, and federal governments in educational decision-making? Asking a normative question such as this may seem hopelessly naive when, in reality, roles are most frequently defined by political clout, expediency, or historical precedent. However, with the Department Status of education in question, opportunities for changing the *status quo* arise which are usually not possible. A new organizational structure offers a chance to make discontinuous changes in purpose and process. Further, the essential institutional status of education will likely be very low if federal decisionmakers are intent on dumping every responsibility that can reasonably be jettisoned. Therefore, for reasons of both substance and legitimacy, an examination of the optimum minimum federal role in education seems indicated.

At present, the generally accepted definition of the federal educational role is:

Major Goals

(1) promotion of equal access
(2) enhancement of equal achievement

Minor Goals

(1) research toward new directions
(2) assessment
(3) dissemination

Few would question the need for some federal involvement in these areas, given the complexity of the issues involved, the enormous costs of change, and the social benefits to be gained by progress toward these goals. Is this a sufficient federal role for the next decade?

One method for determining whether these present roles constitute the minimum necessary future federal involvement in education is to examine likely coming challenges and opportunities for our society. A case can be made that purely internal problems in education can often best be handled by a combination of individual, local, and state initiatives; but external problems arising from changes in education's context usually are so systemically interlinked to national and international issues that federal help is needed to resolve them. (One historical example is the launching of Sputnik by the USSR and the passage of the National Defense Education Act in response). Are similar crises likely to occur in the 1980s that will need national level guidance and funding, and what new federal role in education might these involve?

The Future Context for Education

In the next ten years, what major social developments are likely to occur, and how may these affect human services such as education? The forecasts following are speculative (as is any statement about the future), but constitute a reasonable spectrum of probable predictions for the decade.

Economics

The 1980s will be a time of major economic instability and uncertainty, as chaotic a period as has existed since the 1930s. The first portion of the decade will likely cycle among periods of low growth with very high inflation, stagnation with high inflation, and recession with moderate inflation. This period will probably be succeeded by:

either

massive capital investment, with emerging successes in technology and technocracy beginning to lay the foundations of new prosperity,

or

the relative impotence of technology and technocracy to solve current crises, followed by fiscal collapse to some type of economic catastrophe (such as a Second Depression or a "Weimar Germany" scenario brought on by hyperinflation).

On the domestic level, pressure will increase for protection of American jobs by limiting foreign imports, even at the cost of forcing consumers to buy higher priced goods. Long-term, this may strengthen the eroding American industrial base and provide needed capital for investment. Short-term, protectionism will contribute to the inflationary spiral and may have serious international repercussions as other countries take similar steps in response.

Globally, economic interdependence has become so profound that small scale disruptions in a minor country may culminate in grave worldwide economic difficulties. Oil supplying nations are one obvious example; less well known is the potential impact of defaults on indebtedness by countries such as Brazil, Ecuador, or Turkey. (Brazil has accumulated such a large debt—primarily to U.S. banks—that two-thirds of its total exports profits go to pay *interest* costs). A national or even global economic depression could be triggered should any of these countries suddenly repudiate their obligations.

No obvious short-term solutions are available to control these potential sources of economic instability or to limit the negative consequences should a crisis develop. Thus, the spectrum of potential economic futures for the U.S. in the 1980s is relatively broad, ranging from a slow reemergence into the prosperity of the 1960s to a sudden collapse into economic catastrophe. How may such a variable and hazardous economic outlook affect the human service areas?

Education, health, government, and the other labor-intensive service industries are likely to experience grave financial difficulties in the next decade. Certainly, a severe downturn in the national economy would adversely affect budgets in these areas; less obvious are the negative effects that a long period of high inflation would have. Considering the impact of inflation on education in some detail can illustrate how a number of quantitative fiscal changes may interact to cause a profound qualitative change.

Part of inflation's potential for grave damage occurs because citizens seem to be approaching the maximum percentage of their income that they are willing to spend for education (currently a little less than 9% of the Gross National Product). The aging of the population; the dwindling proportion of taxpayers with children in the schools; and competition from the recreation, transportation, housing, food, and health sectors for the consumer dollar all are eroding potential funding for education. Developments such as the passage of "Proposition 2½" in Massachusetts indicate that the trend toward more funds for education may be starting to reverse.

One of the reasons why the price of educational services has continuously risen is that in periods of inflation, costs in labor-intensive industries rise faster than costs in capital-intensive industries. For example, from 1965–75, the Consumer Price Index rose 69%, but educational costs rose 155%. Much of this can be attributed to salaries rising faster than capital costs. The continuous improvement of machines in efficiency stands in sharp contrast to recent low rates of increase in human productivity and is a key factor in this disparity.

At some point, the rapidly rising costs of labor-intensive industries such as education will bump up against revenue ceilings. Since education is a public sector activity, extra costs cannot easily be passed on to consumers, but must be met from tax revenues (or deficit financing). Thus, the result of prolonged inflation is to create increasingly bloody competition among the human service industries for ever scarcer resources. Sooner or later, taxpayers are likely to rebel (as indicated above, this point may be fast approaching). The result will be that education will become progressively less able to keep pace with inflation, and losses will mount each year.

For any sector of the economy, even small yearly reductions in budget cumulate to a major drain in fiscal resources fairly quickly. At present, inflationary losses for many educational agents are running at least 14% per year, but revenues are growing at only around 7% per year: about a 7% net debit. In ten years, an average 7% loss per year will leave education with one-half the revenues (in real terms) it now has.

Further, given the general economic woes society will experience from high inflation, education will not have a strong claim on social priorities in terms of extra funding. Creating a favorable business climate, reducing stress on the poor, minimizing government spending and coping with international tensions will take priority. Thus, even a high employment economic climate may well pose severe problems for education if inflation stays high; recession or depression would create even more severe difficulties.

Technology

The availability of inexpensive, powerful miniature computers will cause a massive shift in occupational roles over the next ten years. Since capital-intensive industries have a competitive advantage over labor-intensive sectors during inflationary periods, rote tasks will gradually become automated (especially in areas—such as information processing—in which no manipulative functions are required). Occupational demand will center on skills of flexibility, creativity, and decision-making given incomplete information (all of which machines are not well adapted to do).

New developments in instructional technology will offer, for certain subjects, cost-effective alternatives to traditional teaching methods. Microcomputer and videodisk hardware will be readily affordable; limited availability of quality software will become the major restriction on use. Corporations will increasingly utilize these instructional systems to reduce industrial training costs; middle and upper income families will use these technologies for enrichment of personal time and enhancement of learning.

Resistance by the human service industries to the substitution of technology for human workers is likely to be profound. Faced with a difficult economic situation, educators will lobby strongly against replacing teachers with machines. The major impact on learning may come in non-school settings such as the home and workplace.

A non-formal, geographically dispersed, capital-intensive system of education may conceivably emerge, as industries retrain their work force for job-roles redefined by microprocessors. Corporations are already on the forefront of using technology for teaching purposes because its efficiency and reduced staffing expenses create very high economic incentives. While the difficulties in evolving a whole new model of instruction, evaluation, and certification are substantial, the motivation for such innovation is now present. (Books did not suddenly become central when the printing press was developed; they were first widely used when an economic incentive appeared.)

Such a non-formal instructional technology system, once established for adult retraining, might quickly expand its influence because of easy add-on capabilities. For example, parents who could afford to do so would supplement their children's schooling using system software packages, and eventually might lobby to substitute these cheaper methods for the training portion of K-12 education. Such a shift might focus primarily on the "Three R" skills taught in the elementary grades or, perhaps more likely, might be directed toward vocational training and computer expertise for secondary level students. Within fifteen years, through such expansions, a capital-intensive system might rival the labor-intensive system in importance. The unanswered equity and practice questions of such a new educational model are numerous and troubling.

Demographics

The "baby bust" generation will pose sequential problems of enrollment decline for elementary, secondary, and college level education through the 1980s. However, an upturn in student population will begin in the lower elementary grades in the middle of the decade.

The increasing presence of women in the work force, as well as greater demands for occupational education, will create needs for extra-family socialization and supervision of children.

Many immigrants will settle in metropolitan areas, including significant numbers of non-English speaking students. Spanish will become the dominant language in some regions of the United States.

High rates of mobility will cause regional flux in student populations. The Southern, Southwestern, and Rocky Mountain portions of the country will experience net population in-migration from the rest of the United States. Out-migration of middle and upper class families to suburbs and rural areas will continue (despite gentrification). Minority and lower income students will increasingly become concentrated in urban school districts. The demographic structure of the large cities may eventually resemble a "bullseye", with wealthy families without school age children at the heart of the city, surrounded by a ring of poor families and a second concentric ring of middle class suburban households.

The proportion of elderly persons in the population will continue to rise, placing stress on income redistribution programs (such as social security and Medicare). Educational demand among adults and the elderly will grow as these age cohorts increase in size.

In general, all the human service professions will be stressed by these demographic shifts. Despite the high predictability of these developments, few decisionmakers have given any thought to how best to respond to major variations in the size and needs of their clientele. The concept of accepting responsibility for adult education in extra-school, non-formal settings (the likely major area of new demand) has been particularly resisted by educators.

One emerging challenge is that the roles which formal education plays in different types of communities may become quite disparate by the 1990s. Communities with a large percentage of two-wage families will expect schools to provide much higher levels of supervision and socialization than areas with a predominance of one-income households. In urban areas, demographic concentration of minority groups and immigrants (many non-English speaking) will create a set of educational needs quite different from those of suburban, upper-income areas. Schools (mostly private) that convert quickly to capital-intensive instructional approaches will have a very different classroom environment than the traditional, as will schools which respond to pressures for a meritocratic, high-powered system of gifted/talented education to train an elite capable of reversing America's problems.

High population mobility will increase the need to ensure smooth transitions among the diverse environments. Moreover, the uniformly high degree of socialization requisite for functioning in a high technology society will require some amount of national standardization and coordination. Substantial innovation will be necessary to meet these emerging, diverging educational needs.

Governance

Financial pressures on citizens will intensify the existing "anti-taxes" movement, and some business and education groups will attempt to link anti-regulatory arguments to this cause. The result will be a pervasive "reduce governance" stance. Conflicting pressures will come from those who push for "strong leadership" that can ride roughshod over inconvenient regulatory restrictions and safeguards. Representative democracy may thus be eroded by pressures both for localism and for unitary authority.

Public response to emerging resources crises (e.g., water) will continue to be directed toward programs for crash priority replenishment. These will tend to be oriented toward high technological sophistication rather than conservation measures involving lifestyle changes. Competition among federal priorities will become extremely intense, to the relative detriment of long-range investment strategies.

Demands for accountability and evidence of competence will force conservative decisionmaking and the proliferation of paperwork to document performance. These tendencies will create further problems in institutional ability to respond to change. Gains made toward increased citizen input into decisionmaking may be reversed as efficiency and effectiveness decline and public antipathy to red tape and slow review procedures grows.

Concern will increase about the relative economic and military status of the United States in the world. National defense will reemerge as a top priority area, and the performance of different social sectors will be adversely compared to that of their counterparts in other countries. A tendency toward forceful action to ensure availability of key resources will be coupled with a belief that U.S. affluence is more important than global egalitarianism. Some conventional "police actions" may occur as a new, multiple country Cold War evolves. As global and military tensions increase, the educational pendulum is likely to swing farther toward a reemphasis on high quality schooling for the intellectual elite.

Cultural Beliefs and Values

Social instability and change and a growing sense of lack of control will create difficulties in coping for many people, as the technological and bureaucratic complexity of society increases. Reliance on the advice of "experts" for most choices will become increasingly necessary, but simultaneously resented. Universal socialization of the population to the multiple, higher-order cognitive and affective skills required for participation in society will require major expenditures of scarce resources, yet will be essential to the proper functioning of a high technology society.

Heightened values conflicts will occur, as multiple special interest groups do battle on individual ethical issues such as abortion, individual rights and responsibilities, and biomedical manipulation. Perceived incapacities of technology and technocracy to deal with current crises will cause a major struggle between those who continue to espouse a narrowly rational, high technology-based, materialistic "American Dream" and those who proselytize for a shift to a more adaptive, ecological, spiritual lifestyle. Planning, leadership, and self-renewal will become increasingly problematic for institutions, as responding to crises in the "here and now" consumes ever greater amounts of time and energy. One risk of this cultural anomie at a time of economic distress and fear of other countries is the emergence of a charismatic dictator, who will use "rally around America" ideology as a basis for limiting diversity and pluralism.

Leadership will become very difficult in education, as multiple, continual crises drain resources. The strains which students experience in their lives will make maintenance of traditional academic standards almost impossible. A pervasive sense of lack of control will cause disillusionment, apathy, and cynicism about the possibilities of preserving the current schooling system. Voucher systems and the franchises which develop in response will further complicate this situation.

National priorities and local mandates will continually be in conflict, posing grave problems for educational decisionmakers. The current dissensus on what the basic content of education should be will widen. In short, the existing model for formal education could conceivably become almost unworkable.

The above group of forecasts presents a range of changes in education's context, each one reasonably probable. That all of these predictions would occur is unlikely; a given event might potentiate some developments while repressing others. (For example, an economic depression would make the rise of militarism in the U.S. more likely, while reducing the chances of emergence of a non-formal, capital-intensive instructional system).

That few of these predictions would occur is equally unlikely. These forecasts all stem from powerful forces and trends in the present and—radical as they may seem today—will retrospectively be viewed as a cautious and conservative assessment of likely directions. One major lesson from past attempts to predict education's future has been that the "surprise-free" extrapolation is the *least* likely outcome. The essence of good strategic planning is to be prepared for the full range of eventualities, while allocating resources preferentially by relative probability.

Which of these potential developments, then, are most likely? Early in the 1980's, the seeds of all these trends will be present, but as the decade matures one of two clusters will probably emerge as dominant. One cluster of probable futures centers around the optimistic outcome depicted in the economic section and includes:

- successes in technology and technocracy leading to prosperity
- rising investment in domestic industries
- inflation slowly falling to the single digit level by the end of the decade
- lower levels of government spending and influence
- multiple international economic tensions
- progress in reducing dependence on overseas energy supplies
- massive job retraining

- major use of instructional technology in workplace and home settings
- widening gap between rich and poor
- reliance on extremely complex technologies for the necessities of life

The other cluster assumes a pessimistic economic progression, which will potentiate:

- fiscal collapse to a simultaneous high inflation and recession
- extreme fluctuations in the world monetary situation
- less disparity between rich and poor
- high levels of government influence and spending
- major emphasis on national defense
- heightened value conflict in society

Thus, alternative likely future scenarios can be visualized within the general group of forecasts listed earlier. Of course, elements of both clusters will be evident in any plausible future, and some factors (such as demographic change) will occur largely independent of other trends.

Shifts in the Federal Role

In light of the challenges and opportunities discussed above, what is the optimum minimum federal role in education in the 1980s? Certainly, some strategies for achieving current federal goals will need to be altered. A brief examination of such changes may help to determine if this type of "fine tuning" will be a sufficient federal response to likely societal development.

Work toward achieving the goals of promotion of equal access and enhancement of equal achievement may be affected by:

(1) *loss of educational revenues (caused by inflation and/or recession:* Further cuts in school budgets are likely heavily to affect supplemental programs for poor and minority students. These groups have few extra-school resources to use in compensating for such losses.

(2) *emergence of a non-formal, capital intensive instructional system:* Access to hardware will be more difficult for lower income students. Further, software design is likely to be biased toward the cultural background of advantaged students (who represent the largest single market for manufacturers).

(3) *growing disparity among educational needs in different communities:* Areas with the largest financial needs may have the smallest fiscal base. Moreover, teachers will tend to gravitate toward communities with greater resources and fewer problems.

(4) *erosion of decionmakers' capability to act:* Maintaining the *status quo* discriminates against poor and minority populations. As leadership becomes increasingly difficult, the momentum for equity-enhancing innovation will diminish. Further, a shrinking resource base (with concommitant entrenchment by special interest groups and bureaucracies) will diminish the level of marginal discretionary funds available for innovation.

The goal of promoting quality through research toward new directions, assessment, and dissemination may become more difficult to attain because of:

(1) *losses of educational revenues:* In theory, innovation might be stimulated by financial hardship, as decisionmakers realize that traditional models cannot function at emerging resource levels and seek alternative approaches. In practice, however, retrenchment tends to take highly conservative directions which suppress new ideas even as old models become increasingly ineffective under fiscal stress.

(2) *extensive occupational retraining in extra-school settings:* The indifference of educators to worker retraining outside of formal certification programs is prompting industry to undertake its own design of a new, capital-intensive instructional model. Unless bridges are built so that such innovation reflects the knowledge of both educators and industry trainers, the resultant system is likely to be overly narrow and of questionable effectiveness (thus duplicating the mistakes educators historically made with instructional technology), as well as diminishing healthy societal pressures for reform within the traditional schooling system.

(3) *new and idiosyncratic needs in individual communities:* Major increases in the disparity of student populations will further stress the ability of teacher training institutions to certify graduates capable of meeting the full spectrum of educational needs. Research results will be less generalizable, dissemination strategies will of necessity become individually tailored, and the overall complexity of assessment will greatly increase.

(4) *the rise of international tensions:* Concerns about United States stature as a world power will increase lobbying to orient the curriculum toward scientific training for the gifted/talented. With a limited amount of both time and resources, schools will be forced direct innovative activities in narrow, highly focused directions of benefit only to a small percentage of the student population.

An overarching problem in achieving all federal educational goals will be intensified pressure to reduce government spending, with correspondingly high levels of competition among social service programs. The temptation for federal policymakers will be to fund only immediate-impact, targeted programs as a method of building constituent support for educational funding by Congress. Such a strategy can only backfire eventually, as educational problems worsen for lack of attention to their root causes.

Farsighted policies to address these obstacles to achieving federal goals can be envisioned. For example, an assertive research, improvement, modeling, and dissemination program in educational technology could demonstrate to industry the value of educators' expertise, promote adult education in the workplace as a priority, and help to ensure that software development reflects the cultural diversity of users and the needs of special populations. Would a series of comparable strategies for each of the areas above be a sufficient minimum federal response to likely developments of the 1980s?

While essential, such a far reaching set of strategic changes is unlikely to be successful if perceived solely as "fine tuning" of existing priorities. Needed is an overarching new goal for federal involvement which integrates these diverse strategies into a consistent whole and affirms the need for a transformation of the existing educational model. This transformation would be so broad as to require for its achievement a major national effort toward reconceptualization and reprioritization. Only the federal government is large enough to initiate such a shift. (In systems theory terms, the boundaries of the problem are so large and its influence so sweeping that only intervention by the largest component of the social system is likely to bring about a change).

What would be this new federal role in education? One way of stating its purpose is to say that the federal education establishment would become responsible for coordinating knowledge production and distribution systems in society. That is, the national government, as the institution best equipped to accomplish these vital purposes, would:

- coordinate the process of anticipating societal needs for knowledge
- develop in educational institutions the capacity for training appropriate levels of human resources
- assess the ability of current institutional mechanisms for generating needed knowledge, and augment this capability where necessary
- organize the dissemination to citizens of vital knowledge so

that it is fully utilized.

Such a mandate would include expanding formal education to all age groups through schools, families, communities, workplace, and media. Intrinsic would be activities as diverse as helping develop TV programming to respond to a gasoline crisis and initiating long-range studies of "the basics" needed by youth in the next ten years.

Some of these activities now take place at varying levels of quality within different Departments of the government. Others have been left to the "invisible hand" of self-interest. A lack of overall coordination and integration, however, has resulted in many of the emergent problems of the 1980s. To place such coordination responsibilities under the "umbrella" of education, rather than scattered in Labor, NSF, NIH, and other agencies, seems the best strategy. Education is the logical choice to oversee this area because the production of knowledge and human resources is its intrinsic function, and the new role is intertwined with its current goals and responsibilities.

Such a new goal transcends "fine tuning" to give a simultaneous mandate for educational transformation and a carefully limited set of objectively measurable priorities which the federal government is best equipped to execute. Conceivably, the costs of implementing these additional responsibilities could be defrayed by the increased efficiency of coordinated efforts and by the benefits in societal productivity that ensue. In fact, when compared to the results of a *laissez faire* approach for past decade, this strategy provides such a potential strengthening of America's world economic position as to be justified on that basis alone. Thus, this proposed change represents a discriminate augmentation of the minimum federal role in education based on cost/benefit considerations and arguments for efficiency and effectiveness.

Immediate Steps for the Department of Education

Of course, if handled with what cynics would term "typical government efficiency", such a new federal role would be ill-designed, bogged down with red tape, wasteful of resources, fought over by special interest groups, and hopelessly confused within six months of inception. Certainly, the credibility of the Department of Education in immediately announcing and undertaking such a program would be very low, and political retaliation for encroaching on the perogratives of other federal Departments would surely follow. What then could the Department do to build both a reputation for competence in this area and a public mandate for such an augmentation of responsibility?

First, a series of studies needs to be undertaken to determine and document the cost to America of *not* now coordinating:

(1) the anticipation of societal needs for knowledge,
(2) the development of human resources,
(3) the generation of needed knowledge, and
(4) the dissemination of knowledge to citizens.

Such studies could serve as the basis of a rationale for organizing the work now taking place in these individual areas.

Second, the relative roles of individuals; corporations; educational institutions; local, state, and federal governments; and other social agents in knowledge production and dissemination need to be delineated. In particular, the essentiality of a federal coordinating role must be evident if public support is to be obtained.

Third, current federal efforts to improve portions of the knowledge production and distribution process need to be assessed. The competence of government programs in this area must be documented and their cost-effectiveness shown.

Fourth, the utility of locating the federal coordination effort under education must be determined. This will require both an historical examination of the effectiveness of other Departments and a careful plan for action should this new goal be assigned to Education.

Finally, a national crisis must occur to generate the necessary political leverage for change. Given the likely developments for the 1980s discussed earlier, the probability of such a crisis is overwhelmingly high.

Given all these steps, the assumption of a new limited role by education could take place within three years. Such a delay is dangerous—given the peril of our present national situation—but probably unavoidable.

This shift would not detract from the primacy of current federal goals in education. On the contrary, improving educational equity and quality would be absolutely essential to the success of this new role. Only if all human resources in the populace achieve their full potential can knowledge production and distribution be maximized, and the enhancement of equity and quality would be necessary for such maximization.

CONCLUSION

All of education is predicted on images of the future. Educational research is tailored to the future contexts in which it is to be used, instruction is based on a vision of the world in which today's students will be decisionmakers, and school budgets assume that economic and demographic projections will be accurate. What does it mean for our daily work if the future seems ever more indeterminate and negative developments increasingly likely?

When people aren't certain about what's going to happen, or the future seems threatening to them, the natural response is to retreat into a psychological framework in which we say, "I don't know what's really going to happen, but the safest thing is to assume that at least some things will stay the same. These perennial issues are the areas in which I'm going to work; it's too risky to respond to a mere probability". So, almost all federal effort is spent wrestling with "eternal" educational issues and problems. Perennial concerns are crucial and should absorb perhaps 70% of our resources, but the other 30% needs to be oriented toward resolving the uncertain future issues outlined above. The *least* speculative stance to adopt is to acknowledge and prepare for legitimate indeterminacy.

This paper has argued that:

- the federal educational role has been narrowed beyond its minimum appropriate level
- opportunities to change this situation presently exist, but will disappear with time
- the peril of America's future is great, and our need for societal flexibility and productivity is very high
- educational transformation is essential to creating this productivity and flexibility
- revision of current federal educational goals is necessary, but insufficient without adding a new role
- giving the limited goal of coordinating production and distribution of knowledge to the Department of Education will help to resolve this situation

The 1980s will be a grim period in part because America believed that a "context-free" education was sufficient for most citizens, that a high technology society could be run by a small group of experts and staffed by a large group of people with rudimentary knowledge in "the basics". This assumption is obviously wrong; a complex society requires that every citizen be as intelligent and creative as possible. The costs to our society of not educating one person—in terms of crime, welfare expenditures, and foregone productivity—are far higher than the expenses of a good education from birth throughout life. For this reason, it is vital that the national government become active in reshaping education's relationship to society, thus laying the foundation for a bright future.